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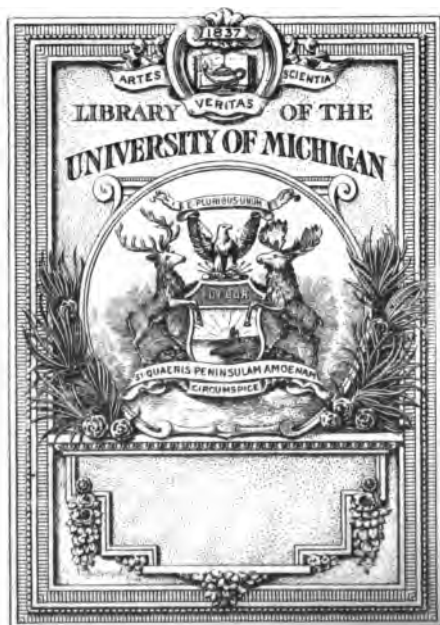
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OUR



POLITICAL PARTIES.

BY

BENJAMIN F. TEFFT, D.D., LL.D.

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18339

# OUR POLITICAL PARTIES.

*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas.*—VIRGIL

BY  
FRANKLIN  
BENJAMIN F. TEFFT, D.D., LL.D.,

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BOSTON:  
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS.  
NEW YORK:  
CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM.  
1880.



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## A WORD BEFOREHAND.

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IN 1860 the South was solid for treason and rebellion ; and its hope to succeed in the destruction of this Republic was based on the aid and comfort *promised* it by its political supporters in the Northern States.

In 1880 the same South is solid to ruin the same country, by getting political possession of it ; and its sole dependence is the second time on the same class of Northern allies, who have again *bargained* to give their Southern friends the triumph at the voting-precincts, which was lost to them on the field of blood.

*Only forty-seven electoral votes are wanted of the North to deliver the nation into rebel hands.*

Such is the present crisis.

To this result the nation has been coming for almost a hundred years.

The following pages sketch the history, and expose

the underlying principles, of the century's struggle, besides showing what the emergency demands of every patriot.

The time has come when every citizen should read and think. It is a time, I hope, when the weakest will also be allowed to speak. In a similar danger, Xenophon, the great Greek commander, not only suffered, but exhorted, the humblest of his armed followers to offer his opinion : "*Let even the private soldier dare to teach ;*" and the reason assigned was the one now appropriate : "*For we are all of us,*" said the wise and prudent general, "*imploing the same deliverance.*"

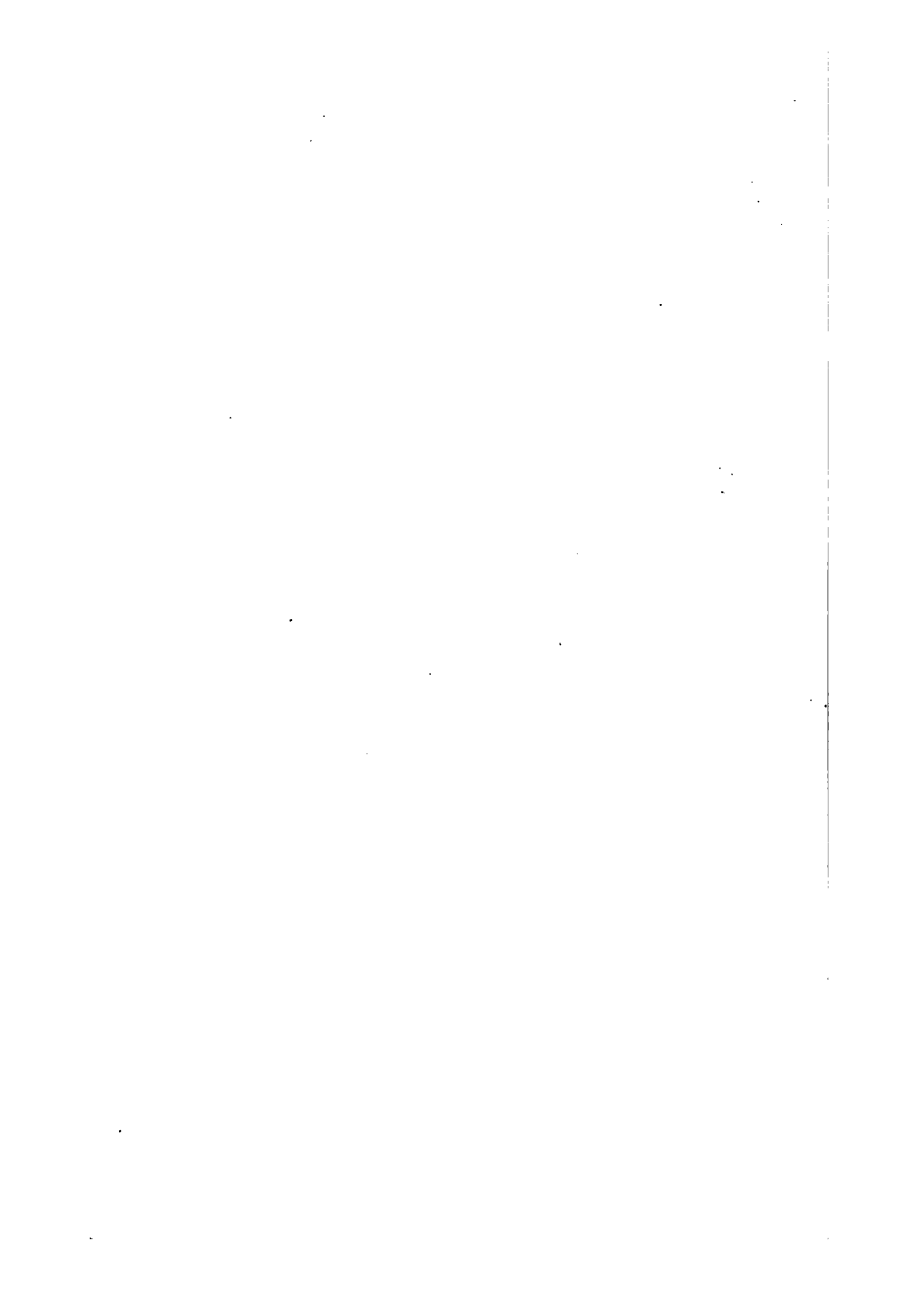
But the history herein contained is of perpetual significance ; it deals with a line of facts never to be forgotten by any true American ; and yet, in addition to the several millions of citizens who in past time have been giving their suffrages without always keeping them sufficiently fresh in their recollection, there are every year some two hundred thousand new voters, and every four years more than half a million of them, who ought to know what is here presented them while forming their political connections, certainly before casting their first ballots.

This little work, therefore, prepared for being read in the presence of a private club of citizens, and by

them requested for publication, is here committed to the use and consideration, it is hoped, of a larger audience ; and, when the reader shall have honored these pages with his perusal, all that the writer can ask of him is, that he shall go and express, not to him, but to our common country, as a genuine American, and as often as it may be his duty and privilege to vote, his honest, independent, heartfelt opinion of the great question herein debated, at the polls.

B. F. T.

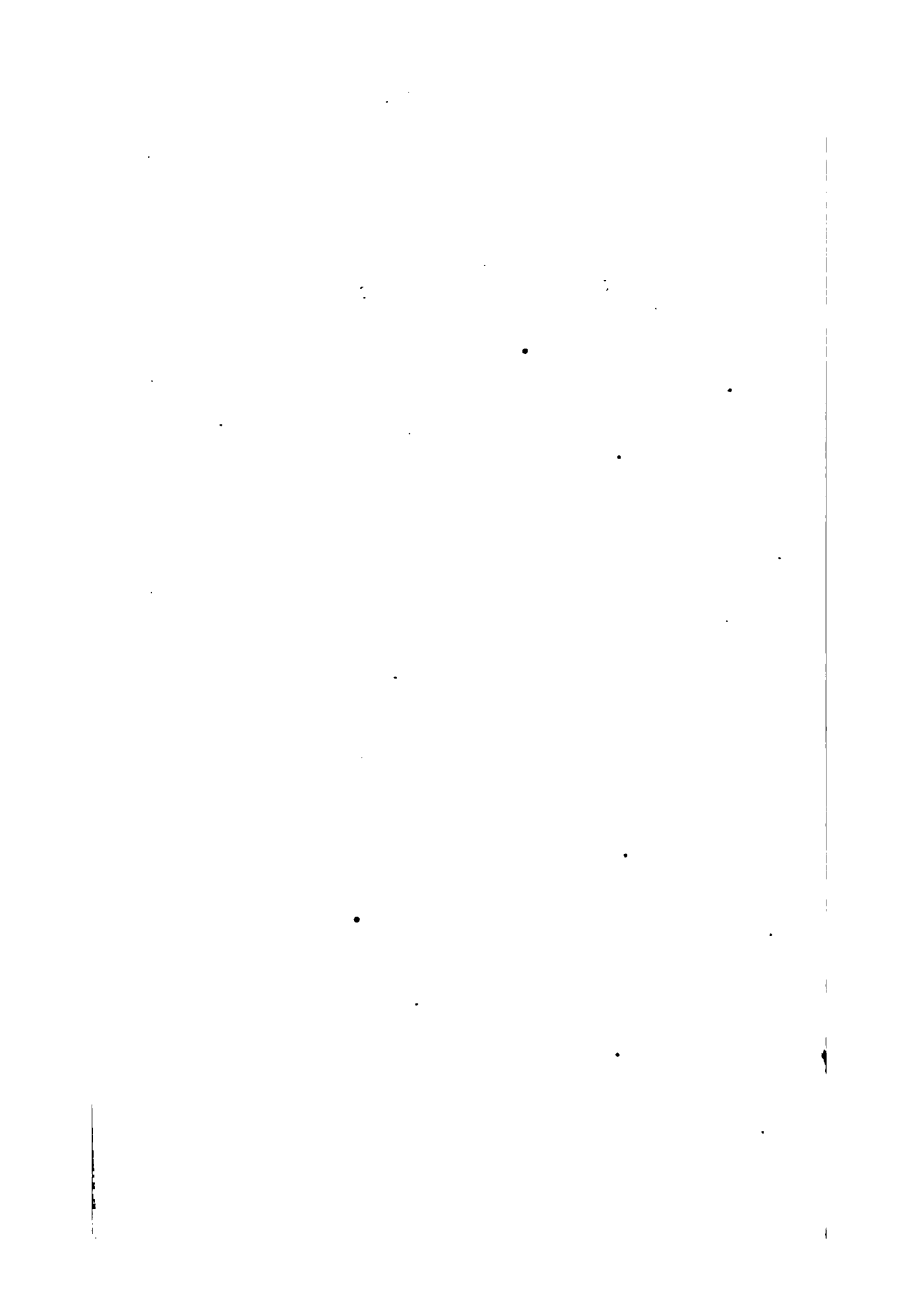
WORTHLEY BROOK, March 4, 1880.



# IN BRIEF.

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## OUR POLITICAL PARTIES.

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FELLOW-CITIZENS, — It is not as a professional advocate, not as a blind partisan, not as a Northern sectional, but as a grateful member of the great American household, that I would accept the honor of addressing you. Bold as my undertaking is, I plead the danger of the times, your abounding courtesy, and a sense of duty.

Born and bred in the so-called "Empire State," a State larger, wealthier, and more populous than some of the European kingdoms ; containing, too, the industrial and financial metropolis of the whole continent, towards which all forces tend, and all currents flow, — one might be excused, perhaps, for the indulgence of some State pride. But all this is waived, or no stress is laid upon it ; for, with us, it is the common bond of fraternity to look upon our natal section as a part, and nothing other than a part, of a grander and more illustrious country, of which it is our higher boast to be known as citizens. To be a New-Yorker,



or a Northerner, or Southerner, as things stand, is something. But to be an American is glorious; and it is with an emotion not much unlike that of real pride, that the heart of every true American swells at the magnificence of the mighty nation in which his lot is cast. As one of fifty millions of free and independent people, whose territory stretches

“ From sea to sea, from oranges to ice,” —

a domain exceeding by six hundred thousand square miles the whole of Europe, a nation that has established the best condition of human society over the most beautiful as well as bountiful portion of the world's surface, it would be difficult not to recognize the grandeur of the great connection. Nor, when realizing this sublime relationship, would a broad-minded man easily consent to fall back into that inferior consciousness of mere State citizenship, with which a narrower survey, or a more provincial education, might lead others to be content.

But in saying this, fellow-citizens, I do not forget that in our great country the people are not yet unanimous in the adoption of this larger idea, this wider and worthier sentiment of American nationality. National citizenship, as felt at the North, and mere State citizenship, as generally accepted at the South, have been from the first the two antagonistic principles in the great Republic. Our national annals consist of little or nothing else than the struggles of these two irreconcilable and contending forces. The two

great parties, into which our population has ever and always been divided, were created by them ; and no one of us can properly understand the past careers, or the present aims and ends, of these two opposing bodies, without thus looking carefully at their animating sentiments. There are many of our citizens, no doubt, whose suffrages have been given for years, for a lifetime it may be, to maintain a theory of citizenship, — which is only another way for saying a mode of government, — who, could they have clearly seen the fundamental idea they were thus maintaining, would have recoiled from it as they would from any other serious evil ; and therefore the object now in view is, by a few undeniable examples, to make so plain and just a statement of the ideas, principles, purposes, of the two great political organizations, so long and fiercely fighting for the control of our general government, and now yet contending, that every one of us will be constrained to realize the ground he personally occupies, and not less the place he would need to take to satisfy the demands and cravings of his own natural character. For there are thousands of men daily voting against themselves without knowing it ; and they fail to know it only because they consent to follow after names and numbers, instead of studying facts with that intelligence which the God of nature has bestowed upon them.

Before proceeding to this work, however, there are two things which it is only fair to have particularly stated and understood : first, that the writer is not a

politician ; that he holds no office ; that he is seeking none ; that he is looking only, in the little he can do, to the best good of our common country ; and, secondly, that every word he utters shall be based on the facts of history.

You will easily perceive, therefore, in the light of these preliminary statements, that, with such a person, names are nothing. Indeed, it is not unknown to you, that the two contending parties have had different names at different periods, while their respective aims and purposes have remained unchanged. Nothing, certainly, is more vague or false than party epithets. Wicked parties, like wicked men, are apt to take on virtuous titles, as the meanest of the popes assumed the name of Pius, and as Nero, the most brutal of all governors, gloried in being called a Cæsar.

Looking, therefore, not at words, but things, it would be but just to history, as well as suited to our present undertaking, to call one of the two political organizations the *National*, while the other would be fitly known as the *Provincial*, party: for the one has always been at work in the building of a country strong enough for the defense of liberty, not only at home, but against the world if need be ; and the other, forgetful of our great work for ourselves and the people of all lands, and of the impossibility of our standing long in doing it, or even of supporting our own existence, unless held together by some inherent strength, has ever been magnifying and fighting for the States, as if shallowly conceiving that the whole could ever be



made to imagine itself as gaining any thing by the ruin of its parts.

I. GEORGE WASHINGTON THE FOUNDER OF  
THE NATIONAL PARTY.

If now, at the very beginning of this examination of the parties, any one would see, first of all, the origin, ideas, and character of the one here called the National, it would be necessary to go back for a moment to the life and services of that most illustrious of all Americans, whom the world knows as **Washington.**

Take into your hands any one of his best biographers, note carefully the several stages of his intellectual and moral development, obtain the political opinions he had formed in mature life, after his varied and vast experience, and you have gained your purpose.

Go and stand, indeed, before the great bronze door in the National Capitol, a work of magnificent design and masterly execution ; study the eight historic periods of his existence, so exquisitely carved upon its panels ; think, ruminate, and reason, till you comprehend the meaning of each pictured scene as it comes before you, — and you will find the great man slowly but surely growing up into those conceptions which made him the creator of a policy and a party.

In the storied events of that one man's career, in fact, you will behold the gradual formation, together

with all the ends and aims, of that great political organization which originated and has many times saved the nation; and if you will consent to let the conception enter into your soul, and take its proper position there, it will never leave you, but live within your heart as the beautiful ideal of the higher life of a genuine American citizen. Let us spend a moment or two in the study of this life-picture.

Born Feb. 22, 1732, in the Old Dominion, of a distinguished and wealthy parentage, it was Washington's misfortune, while yet a boy of eleven years, to lose his father. But, as it often happens, the mother soon found within herself a capacity quite equal to the situation. Having the sole charge of her deceased husband's estate and business, she still took time to instruct the wonderful child in the rudiments of a thorough English education.

At fourteen years of age, by force of his enterprising genius, he managed to obtain a midshipman's warrant in the British navy. But his mother's entreaties, and his strong affection for her, prevailed over him to abandon glory, and continue his devotion to domestic duties. Then his brother Lawrence, fourteen years older than himself, married and settled at Mount Vernon; and we next find George a frequent visitor at the beautiful country-seat which he was afterwards to inherit and make immortal.

But these visits of the growing lad were not pastimes, such as would be so natural to his time of life; for our hero, even at this early period, while he was



active in person, quick of intellect, and overflowing with good-nature, was ever a close student ; and he always seemed to be in pursuit of some serious business. It was these qualities, no doubt, that first brought him into notice ; and the attentions he began to receive from the foremost men of his day show plainly the remarkable solidity of his natural character. Lord Halifax, who owned nearly one-seventh of the province, was drawn to him by an unbounded admiration of his genius ; and it was with this nobleman that the marvelous youth engaged as a land-surveyor, he having acquired the profession mostly by his own unaided and unremitting application.

You are now to look upon a boy, seventeen years of age, large, well-formed, and beautiful in person, but not old enough to have a beard, accepting a difficult and responsible trust from the wealthiest aristocrat of his day ; and you are to see him, with the implements of his profession poised upon his shoulder, and a few followers not far behind, plunging into the depths of the great forest, which at that time stretched almost continuously from the banks of the Potomac to the mightier rivers of the West, where he was soon to make himself the most skillful diplomat, as to all Indian questions, to be found upon the continent.

When this branch of his remarkable education was completed, the growing young man next enters on another section of his varied life, in which a new element of his exhaustless fund of character was to be developed. In his earliest years he had shown a

natural fondness for military tactics ; his juvenile comrades had been his soldiers ; and he had thus acquired no little proficiency in military drill. Now, at the age of nineteen only, his governor appoints him commander over one of the four military divisions of his province ; and this division, so far from being the easiest of the four, such as might have been given to a favorite knight, was in every way the most dangerous and difficult ; for it included the newest and most exposed portion of the Western frontier, at that time open to the hostile incursions of the Indians and the French, who were then just beginning that savage and bloody war, which seven years later, and largely by our young commander's prowess, ended in a most glorious triumph over both.

It was in this particular section of his life, also, that the rising young general learned the character of another people, whom, though at present friends, he was afterwards to meet as his country's bitterest enemies. It is well known, that, in this protracted and savage struggle, no commander did better service than the youthful Virginia general. The story needs not to be repeated : the world knows it. But, brilliant as were **Washington's** military talents, profound and prudent as he had been in counsel, — more than once the savior of a British army when in danger of annihilation by acting against his advice, — he found, at the end of the war, that he had never been so much as mentioned in the dispatches of the British officers ; and, in the second place, he came out of the contest



with the firm conviction that England had no soldiers equal to our own.

These two facts he laid away to think of in after-life. The one taught him the contemptuous disposition of the mother-country toward her colonial subjects ; and by the other he was prepared to maintain his confidence in his American forces, when afterwards called upon to stand up in opposition to her tyranny.

But it must be here remarked, that, up to this time, **Washington's** whole career had not carried him beyond the limits of a mere provincial education. He was still only a Virginian ; and Virginia was the beginning and the end of his solicitude and affections. The very eulogies heaped upon him at home, at the close of the French and Indian war, only made his Virginianism the more intense ; and had there at this period arisen a contest between his native colony and any one or all of the sister provinces, he would have gone with his own Virginians to the last extreme, as so many did go from the same narrow impulse, in after-years, when such a conflict actually took place.

But now we are to see him taking on the finishing-touches to his great manhood. It was just after the close of this French and Indian war that England began to oppress the colonies. Her despotic treatment drove the provinces together. Singly, in their disunited state, she might have conquered them, as she threatened, in six months. It was no idle boast, indeed, of one of her best generals, that he could march an army of ten thousand English soldiers over the



whole continent. The reference may have been to Xenophon's ten thousand ; and, had the British been such troops as marched after the Greek commander, the colonies might possibly have been overrun, had American unity been impossible. But it was here that England encountered her first, if not saddest, disappointment. America, the moment she was menaced, became for the time a single country ; and Washington was the first of her great sons to feel what Patrick Henry uttered with such vehemence in the Virginian House of Burgesses. "British oppression," cried the majestic orator, his eyes burning with patriotic fire, and his arms extended toward his countrymen, "*has effaced the boundaries of the several colonies. The distinctions between Virginians, Pennsylvanians, New-Yorkers, and New-Englanders are no more. I am NOT a Virginian, but an AMERICAN.*"

Washington, let me remind you, was one of the listeners to this glowing speech, and he was most of all sincere and hearty in applauding the glorious declaration ; for he was himself now no longer a mere Virginian, but a citizen of a great country, which, in his mind, was thereafter to know no separating barriers. Not that he would abolish, but unify, the colonies. He saw in them an empire for liberty, greater in extent than that of Alexander, richer than that of either Cyrus, and more mighty for good to the whole world than was ever commanded by the Cæsars. The idea seized him like an inspiration. It fastened on him like a prophet's vision. By day and by night it haunted

him like a revelation. He gave his whole being to it ; and from that day to the end of his great life, it never for one moment left him.

It was this broad, unselfish, patriotic sentiment that recommended him to his Northern countrymen, and made him commander-in-chief in the coming struggle. It was this that supported him under all the heavy burdens that his country continued to lay upon him. It was this, and this alone, that caused him, at the very beginning of the contest, to leave his loved Virginia, and fly to the rescue of the distant colony of Massachusetts ; and it was the same grand ideal that prompted him to fight the battles of the other States, — New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and the rest, — while, for seven long years, scarcely going even to visit the sunny land that had given him birth.

With all this growth and breadth, however, there was one step more for this great man's mind to take, to make him the **Washington** whom the world has since beheld in history. As commanding general of the American forces, as the leader and dictator of his country in her day of peril, he of course carried that country's cause in his heart of hearts. It is not enough to say of him, that he was America's tower of strength. He was more. During the whole war he was her hope and trust ; and for much of the time he might be said to be, as the people saw him, and as his circumstances often made him in fact, almost America itself : for, when all other men desponded, his resolve stood firm and fast. From him, for most of

the seven bloody years, all measures took their origin. On him all measures rested for their execution. In his life the great cause lived or perished, as his great spirit should bear up or break under its enormous burden. The Continental Congress officially stood behind him ; but at no time were its services prompt enough for his emergencies ; and, whenever he remonstrated with it for its tardiness, their reply always was, — and it was a just answer, — that their readiness was ever thwarted by the slowness of the constituent States. For, in their thirteen assemblies, every proposition of the great commander, after going through the debates of Congress, must be weighed, balanced, and discussed, perhaps opposed and hindered, by narrow men, jealous of their sectional importance, before it could become a legal act ; and it was by this cumbersome method of procedure that the war was prolonged, that much blood and treasure were needlessly expended, and that many times the nation came to the very verge of being lost.

To know the whole truth, therefore, of the origin and consummation of the great man's political theory, you are to see him struggling to save his country in spite of these perpetual embarrassments. Whatever measures he might recommend, particularly after the adoption of the Articles of Confederation, Congress, if approving, was obliged to send them round to the several States for their concurrence. Time was thus perpetually wasted, when celerity was the sole condition of success ; and many a brilliant opportu-

nity was thereby thrown away, because thirteen independent sovereignties had all the time to be consulted before action.

If, indeed, you would realize the permanent effect of this divided and dilatory mode of government on the opinions of the great American, you must see him in his camp, waiting on Congress and the States, when his soul was burning for some movement, in regard to which he had been begging for the proper outfit. Behold him pained by delays, but still patient, appeasing his army when he inwardly felt the justice of their complaints, prevailing over them to stand to their loyalty, when a rasher or less patriotic man would have thrown up his own commission in disgust. Go with him to his tent, where, in an agony of distress, he writes still more urgent letters to the General Government, which, far away from the scene of military operations, seems to wink at these terrible procrastinations out of fear of the jealous States. Take your stand by his rustic bedside, where he lies without sleep till day-dawn, thinking of all possible remedies for this condition of things, planning how to conquer his circumstances in case the States should not comply with his requisitions, praying God not to abandon his country should his countrymen be too slow to succor it, never for once losing faith amidst the general despondency at times settling on the people, all the night through weighing the chances of the future ; then rising at break of day to see what more labor, more endurance, more and greater sacrifices, might avail to make

amends for this tardiness and weakness of an authority, divided among thirteen provincial tyrants, rather than resting securely in one paternal head. Ride with him as he goes to the bloody field of battle, where he is daily forced to play the Fabius when he would have been an Alexander, for ever retreating instead of fighting, because the States had been laggard in authorizing the necessary supplies ; and see withal how patriotically he struggles on, never for once straining his commission, when, as lawful dictator, he was urged to thunder at the doors of Congress, or make himself master of the situation by taking military possession of every provincial capital. Stand by him when the war is over, and hear him solemnly declare, as he often did both in public and in private, that the fearful contest might have been finished in less than half the time, to the saving of vast expenditures of life and money, had he, or had Congress, been left unobstructed by the States. And in all this survey of his great life, you will clearly see how it happened, and why it was, that Washington wanted, when the new Constitution came to be debated, a central government so far superior to the States, that they should be unable to put a veto upon its acts, and strong enough to become the fortress of his country's liberties against all opposition, whether foreign or domestic. He wanted, in other words, not a confederacy, nor a compact of States, not a Hanseatic or Achaian league, to be one, indeed, against a common enemy, but at war among its component members when otherwise at peace ; but

a Nation, so united as to be indissoluble, and thus so powerful as to stand against the world.

At the ripe age of one and fifty, therefore, after a lifetime of hard experience and patriotic labor, and just as he was about to bid farewell to his Revolutionary camp, Washington sat down in his tent, and sketched, in few words, the outlines of a constitution for the happy country he had saved ; and in that act, in the words then and thus employed, he laid the foundations of the great National party, of which he was himself ever afterwards acknowledged as the founder, and of its multitude of illustrious members the first and best.

That instrument, fellow-citizens, still remains ; and the suggestions therein contained have ever been, as they still are, the National party's groundwork of faith. Let us listen to the great man's weighty words : " There are four things," he says, " which I humbly conceive are essential to the *well-being*, I may venture to say to the *existence*, of the United States as an independent power : 1st, An *indissoluble union* of all the States under ONE *federal head* ; 2d, A sacred regard to *public justice* ; 3d, The adoption of a proper *peace establishment* ; and, 4th, The prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition, among the people of the United States, which will induce them to *forget* their *local prejudices* and *politics*, to make those *mutual concessions* which are requisite to the *general* prosperity, and in some instances to *sacrifice their individual advantages* to the WHOLE COMMUNITY."

In this language we find, not the body only, but the very soul, of that National Constitution which, four years after the penning of this sketch, was based upon it; and then, in 1789, the writer of this wise and timely document was raised to the Presidential office to carry out in practice his own ideas of a united nationality, which the people at that time both accepted and understood.

Will any one now ask whether the first proposer of the Constitution knew its import? Not only had he thus given to it the basis of its character, but he had presided daily in the convention that expanded his suggestions into this body of our fundamental law. He had listened to all the debates; he had measured every proposition as presented and discussed. Was he a man capable of comprehending the meaning of such an instrument? Did he know the intentions of the people in creating it? Or was he a person likely to override it in his conceptions for any selfish or ambitious ends?

To propose such interrogations, citizens, is to answer them; and yet, let me here remind you, from the day that Washington took his seat as President, to the last hour of his eight years of civil service, he in no recorded instance ever spoke of the Constitution as a *compact* of the several States, nor of the States themselves as *independent sovereignties*, but as together forming one common country. "My country," "an independent nation," "a united and effective government," are the terms he everywhere employs. "There is a rank due

to it," he says at the first, "among nations;" and in his Farewell Address he condenses into a single paragraph the substance of that political policy which had exhausted the wisdom of his head and the virtues and best wishes of his heart: "The UNITY OF GOVERNMENT," he declares in the most paternal accents, "which constitutes you ONE PEOPLE is also now dear to you. It is justly so; for it is *the main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home, your peace abroad; of your safety, of your prosperity, of that very liberty which you so highly prize.*"

Glorious and ever-memorable words! for they are Washington's final declaration of principles; they prove to us that the great National party, as founded and adorned by him, is also, as it ever has been, the great Union party within these United States. And, could we this day rise so near to heaven as to be able to listen to his voice, he would again assure us, amidst the hush of the universe, that *we are one people for the purpose of being strong, and strong that we and the world may have and hold eternal liberty by virtue of our strength!*

## II.—THOMAS JEFFERSON THE ORGANIZER OF THE PROVINCIAL PARTY.

Having thus discovered the origin of the great National party in the life, labors, and experience of the Father of his Country, it will now be a briefer task to trace the organization of the opposition party, which



has been styled the Provincial, to the hands of another illustrious citizen, **Thomas Jefferson**.

In doing this, it is not essential, as in **Washington's** case, to dwell on the early years of the great politician ; for in his boyhood there were given fewer indications of his future character ; and even his young manhood has been portrayed as that of a convivial, gay, and restless person, fond of sport, of frolic, perhaps of license, thinking less of fame than of his darling violin. Balls, parties, and other pastimes, some of them of a doubtful moral tendency, seem to have constituted his earliest occupation. His flaming red hair and unbridled manner subjected him to much badinage, alternately jocular and severe ; but his brilliancy of thought, together with his pushing ways, made for him a certain access to all sorts of congenial society, whose festivities attracted him ; and this original training, or rather want of training, had much to do, no doubt, in making him a man of the masses, though it at first had the effect of drawing a line of separation, perhaps an indelible one, between his life and that of the more refined and cultivated part of the population.

It is not to be believed, however, that **Jefferson**, even in his early years, was destitute of cultivation. This frivolous style of living did not last always. There came a time, while he was yet young, when our American Alcibiades turned a sharp corner on himself, and gave his mind up to serious purposes ; and it is said that his Socrates, in this sudden conversion of his faculties, he found in **Patrick Henry**. One day, as

the story goes, he sauntered into the Virginia House of Burgesses, where he heard by chance the memorable debate, in which the great orator rose to such superhuman eloquence, in behalf of the colonies against the Stamp-Act tyranny of the mother-country; and the tradition is, that it was this speech which roused his hitherto dormant but powerful intellect, giving a totally new turn to his after-life.

His way was now rapidly upward. Having taken a short course of instruction in the College of William and Mary, he studied law with the celebrated George Withe, and was admitted to the bar when but twenty-three years of age. But pleading was not his forte. He made his way in the world, on the other hand, by writing; for he never was an orator, never even a good speaker; but at the desk he was ready, easy, subtle, and even eloquent; and he consequently gave himself up to the labors and pleasures of the pen, as the resource left him for the acquisition of power, or the enjoyment of fame.

When only twenty-five years old he was chosen by the people of his district a representative to the House of Burgesses. But here he found little opportunity for the display of his rare abilities as a writer. Oratory was what that assembly wanted. Young Jefferson had none to give them; and, for the twelve years subsequent to this election, the remarkable young man was not as eminent as he deserved to be.

Indeed, it was not till 1774, when he published his "Summary View," as he called it, of the rights of

British America, — a bold but respectful argument against English oppression, and audaciously addressed to the British king himself, — that he took his true place as one of the ablest writers of his time.

Mr. Jefferson was now only thirty years of age ; but he had taken his position among the leading statesmen of Virginia ; and the next year, at thirty-one, he was sent as a delegate to the Continental Congress, where his peculiar gift opened for him a broader and more elevated field. The Virginia members knew him as an author ; and it was by their recommendation that he was placed, at the age of thirty-two, on that illustrious committee which immortalized itself by giving to their country and the world that wonderful document, known, and for ever to be admired, as our Declaration of Independence.

It was this great production that constituted Mr. Jefferson's highest work on earth ; for his countrymen have given him the credit of being substantially its author. He had heard every item of it, it is true, presented and discussed in the Congressional debates. His committee, too, consisted of the best thinkers of that patriotic body ; and such men as Franklin and Adams, to say nothing of the rest, could not sit with him in council without re-stating all the points essential to such a document. Still, Jefferson was the actual writer of it ; and it is a work reminding us of Aristotle's loftiest demonstrations of genius, and superior to any thing we have from the boasted abilities of either Solon or Lycurgus. In this work, in truth, this

young man of thirty-two rivaled the eloquence of the classic ages, and reared to his name a monument as eternal as the stars.


When the time came for making a constitution to take the place of that compact of States known as the Articles of Confederation, of which the whole land was weary, Mr. Jefferson was serving his country at the French court. For two years previous to this appointment, he had been governor of his native State. At the time of going abroad, he was an intense Virginian; and, at the critical period of re-writing the fundamental law of the new Republic, he was far away from all those wide and liberal impulses which animated the leaders of the American people when they came to create a nation. He was not a witness to the generous concessions laboriously come to by the different sections of the country in order to make the popular acceptance of the Constitution possible. The very spirit of it, even, he had afterwards to gather from conversations with the members of the Constitutional Convention; and those most conversant with him were naturally they of his own State, where an undoubted majority of the population were opposed to its strong union features, and where the interpretation generally given to it was hostile to its real purpose.

The whole South, in fact, had at this early time shown itself fearful of establishing a general government, which, it was imagined, might be too powerful for its peculiar institutions. This fear was clearly

pointed out by Madison, at the very moment when the Constitution was under examination. "The great danger to our General Government," said that statesman, "is the great Southern and Northern interests of this continent being opposed to each other. Look at the votes in Congress," he adds, "and most of them stand divided *by the geography of the country*, and not according to the size of the States."

While some of the weaker States, indeed, like North Carolina and Rhode Island, were otherwise afraid of a strong government, — of any united government, in fact, — lest they might be putting their necks into the yoke of a master, the whole South was fearful on the ground of its system of slave-labor, which, by union, was to come in direct and perhaps destructive contact with the free-labor system of the North; and there is no chance left for doubt that the few great leaders of the Southern section were the sole means of swinging it into an acceptance of the Constitution, against the popular will, had that will been left to act in obedience to its own instincts. **Washington**, for example, was for union; Virginia adored **Washington**; and the jealous South could offer no effective refusal without Virginia.

The General Government, therefore, having been thus created and set in motion, in spite of this State jealousy, by the out-weighing influence of the great commander, supported by the few of wider views and broader sentiments throughout the country, the only thing left to those opposing it was so to interpret its



powers as to make it as weak, as inefficient, as little capable of being a real government, as possible ; and this was to be effected by setting up the doctrine that it was a mere *agent* of the lowest class, — the agent of the confederated States, an agent with definite instructions which it could not surpass, — without a mind, or character, or discretion, or volition of its own, absolutely incapable of performing the smallest act, even for its own existence, not expressly and literally stated, in so many words, within the written charter of its powers. Fair implication, reasonable deduction, actual necessity, were to be held of no earthly consequence. Before every step, this employed attorney of the States must stop to consult the letter of authority under which he serves, or be snubbed and repudiated by any one of his principals, though all the others might acknowledge his conduct as entirely lawful and correct !

This was the theory, this the party, so warmly espoused by *Jefferson*, on his return from Europe. He went and returned a mere Virginian ; and he never passed beyond this point in his personal development. Though strangely consenting to go with these ideas into *Washington's* cabinet, as Secretary of State, he never ceased to advocate his theory in direct opposition to that of the great first President, for every day of the seven or eight years he acted in this confidential capacity.

His arguments, his hostility, his intrigues, were professedly leveled against *Hamilton*, who, as Secretary

of the Treasury, was a member of the same cabinet, while they were really aimed at Washington himself. "The true barriers of liberty," he all the time maintained, "are State governments." State jealousy of the General Government was the central idea, the very soul, of the party organized by his genius, in opposition to it; and he did not scruple to use the influence of the high position given him by the President to undermine the foundation on which the great man's administration of the government was avowedly based.

It was while still acting as a cabinet-officer, under Washington, that he wrote out those famous resolutions, passed in 1797 by the legislature of Kentucky, and in 1798 by that of his native State, the very first of which asserts the dangerous doctrine of his followers, to whose political heresy nearly all of our national woes are due. You, my countrymen, have often perused and studied the remarkable language therein employed. But suffer me to give it to you in this connection, that you may again behold what a rope of sand it makes of these United, or rather dis-united, States.

"*Resolved*, That the several States, comprising the United States of America, are not united on the principle of unlimited submission to the General Government, but that by compact under the style and title of the Constitution *for* the United States, and of Amendments thereto, *they* (the States) constituted a General Government for *special* purposes, delegated to

that government certain *definite* powers, reserving *each State to itself*, the residuary mass of right to their own self-government ; and that, whenever the General Government assumes undelegated powers, its acts are unauthorized, null, and of no force ; that to this compact each State *acceded* as a State and as an integral party, its co-States forming, as to itself, the other party ; that the government created by this compact was *not* made the *exclusive* or *final* judge of the extent of the powers delegated to itself, since that would have made its discretion, and not the Constitution, the measure of its powers ; but that, as in all other cases of compact of parties having no common judge, each party has an equal right *to judge for itself*, as well of *infractions* as of the *mode and measure of redress*."

Such was "the monstrous doctrine of State sovereignty," as Washington himself characterized it, given to his followers by Thomas Jefferson ; and this after Madison, in the Constitutional Convention, had met and stamped out the treasonable idea by an argument which the author of this resolution did not listen to, and never undertook to answer. "Some contend," said Madison, "that the States are *sovereign*, while in fact they are only *political societies*. There is a gradation of power in all societies, from the lowest corporation to the highest sovereign. *The States never possessed the essential rights of sovereignty*. The States at present are only *great corporations*, having the power of making *by-laws* ; and these are *essential* only



*if they are not contradictory to the general confederation ;*" and in his letter to Randolph, dated at New York, April 18, 1787, when the acceptance of the Constitution was being resisted, on the ground here stated by Mr. Jefferson, he distinctly says : " I hold it as a fundamental point, *that the individual independence of the States is utterly irreconcilable with the idea of an aggregate sovereignty.*"

But Jefferson was three thousand miles from home — the same as twenty or forty thousand miles would be to-day — when this provincial notion of State sovereignty was trampled under foot by the large-minded patriots of the Constitutional Convention ; and now, ten years after the fact, he reproduces it, in its worst form, to make it the central principle of the opposition party.

He declares that the Constitution was made *by* the States, *for* the United States ; when the instrument itself plainly says that it was made *for* themselves *by* the American people. He claims that the States are not united on the principle of unlimited submission ; while the second section of the sixth article of our fundamental law openly declares : " This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made, under the authority of the United States, shall be the SUPREME LAW *of the land* ; and the judges in every State shall be bound thereby, *any thing in the constitution or laws of any State to the contrary notwithstanding !*" He says that the gov-

ernment created by this compact is not the *final judge* of the powers delegated to itself; in face of the second section of the third article, which positively, and in so many words, gives to its Supreme Court absolute and final jurisdiction in all "*controversies to which the United States shall be a party!*"

Mr. Jefferson has been called the father of the strict constructionist theory in this country; but, if this is not pretty loose construction, it would be difficult to determine what to call it!

It is wonderful, indeed, how so forcible a mind could fall into such patent blunders. But this great man seems to have conceived a sort of horror for a central government. Unlike Washington, he had had no war experience to make him feel the value, the importance, the positive necessity, of a strong Nation, for the maintenance of our existence and our liberties. As a rank Virginian, his associations had always been with those people, who, in their seclusion, had not risen in thought beyond their provincial situation, ideas, and sympathies. Politically he was a disciple, a follower, almost a worshiper, of Patrick Henry, who, though a patriot as to independence, wished to retain the absolute sovereignty of the several States, as in the old confederacy, within the Union. More than this, Mr. Jefferson was a lawyer, a desk-lawyer, a man of books, bound up in precedents, accustomed to a servile interpretation of words and sentences; while Washington was a master of out-door facts, a worker amongst men and things, looking ever toward the

wants of a country, rather than the grammatical balance of written periods and paragraphs. **Washington** was prepared to feel the force of the broad-minded maxim of Edmund Burke, that "*THE SPIRIT OF NATIONALITY is at once the bond and safeguard of kingdoms; something above laws, something above thrones — the impassable element of the inner life of states!*"

THIS SPIRIT OF NATIONALITY was never accepted, perhaps never comprehended, by **Mr. Jefferson**. He never seemed to feel it. He would know nothing of it. The separate State, the little home republic, his own Virginia, was always nearer to his feelings, than the vast empire of which it formed a part. The greatest of men are sometimes thus domestic in their affections. **Mr. Jefferson** was a most distinguished representative of this class of persons. He therefore easily made himself the champion and imaginary defender of the States, when, as against the mildest and most paternal of all governments, they needed no defense. Besides, he could thus, and thus only, put himself at the head of the anti-national organization; and it is now enough to say, in passing to another portion of our subject, that the opposition raised by this powerful citizen, in support of his false and dangerous theory of government against that of **Washington**, has ever since constituted, as we are next to see, the sum and substance of the political history of the great Republic.

### III. — THE CONTESTS OF A CENTURY BETWEEN THE TWO GREAT PARTIES.

We are now to witness, in the briefest manner, what struggles, what hostilities, what wars, external and internal, what burdens of debt, dishonor, and shame, this State-sovereignty party has brought upon our country. Let us begin at the beginning, and see how, in all its progress, it has divided our countrymen, raised up sectional animosities, and scourged the land.

1. We behold a very decided exhibition of it in the formation of the first Federal Union.

A union of some sort, as essential to the success of the provinces in their attempts to obtain a redress of grievances at the hands of the British government, had before forced itself upon an unwilling population. Partial unions, in fact, before the final confederation, had for this purpose already been effected. So early as 1773, Pennsylvania and Massachusetts had sent Dr. Franklin to England as their common agent; but the small interest, the little section thus represented by him, was not enough to attract much attention from the British Parliament. Impressed by this circumstance, the faithful representative, who was also a thorough patriot, wrote home, suggesting a wider affiliation of the colonies, carefully advising his correspondents, however, *to be very cautious in their proceedings, so as not to excite the deep-set provincial jealousies* which he knew to be prevailing on this continent.

But provincial jealousy *was* touched by the bare suggestion of a common enterprise; and when, in September, 1774, the first Congress met at Philadelphia, the members went with instructions fettering them as to all general legislation, while one of the provinces was not so much as represented.

Nothing of consequence, therefore, was at this time effected; but on the 19th of April of the next year the battle of Lexington was fought. It was such a call to united action as for the time being to suppress all provincial feeling; and therefore, in the second Continental meeting, held also at Philadelphia, on May 10, 1775, provincialism was kept in check, not eradicated, by the public danger. Consequently, resolving themselves into a "committee of the whole on the state of America," they were compelled to drop all colonial prejudices, and take upon themselves broader views, in assuming the management of affairs over a country in no other way united.

"Placed in this manner at the head of American affairs," says Curtis, in his admirable history of the Constitution, "the Continental Congress proceeded at once to put the country into a state of defense, and virtually *assumed* control over the military operations of all the colonies."

Had the bolder majority of this patriotic body waited for the slow consent of their constituents, the provinces might never have yielded to them the supreme authority demanded by the situation; and by stopping to ask for it, by hanging upon this prin-

ciple of provincial sovereignty, they would have sacrificed the very people saved by them by this assumption of a more vigorous policy. The only way, in fact, to protect the country against colonial jealousy, was, as they discovered, to ignore and override it.

It was by a similar policy of prompt decision on the part of the Congress of 1776, one year after the war had begun in earnest, that the country was startled — there having been no studied consultation with this provincial feeling — with the Declaration of Independence ; **Mr. Jefferson** himself not hesitating to act, for this time, in concert with the great National party. But the cry of the State-rights people was, as it has been so often since, that, in this measure, Congress had exceeded its instructions. Had it not done so, however, the Declaration of Independence would never have seen the light. Provincialism was not then entirely ready for it.

In the next Congress, — that of 1777, — the provincial spirit, having had time to collect itself, and choose a majority of delegates of its own temper, prevailed over the spirit of nationality so completely as to take from it all power of action, even in the most violent emergencies, without the express consent of the several provinces. This was done by the adoption of the celebrated Articles of Confederation, by which Congress was reduced from a prompt and energetic exercise of power, assumed and used for the general good, to a mere advisory body, which, speaking strictly, had no authority at all ; for the very first article, after that

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giving title to the instrument, made the following ruinous declaration: "Each State *retains* its sovereignty, freedom, and independence, and every power, jurisdiction, and right which is not by this confederation *expressly delegated to the United States in Congress assembled.*"

Provincialism, for the time being, thus triumphed. Congress was now bound, hand and foot, by the narrow-minded jealousy of the several States. All its acts were henceforth simply *recommendations* to the State assemblies; and these recommendations were always largely debated, oftentimes rejected, and never assented to in season to have their best effect. Washington, and the army, and the Revolutionary cause were thus nearly sacrificed, in one common holocaust, by a State-rights prejudice, as bad in principle as it was slow, emasculating, and injurious in fact. It was visionary, illogical, and false, as well as hurtful, because no State had ever been for one moment sovereign, or even independent. So Madison, as we have seen, admitted; and Washington states the same conclusion in his Circular Letter, and that without contradiction, in terms equally emphatic. "It is only in our *united* character," says that great man, "that we are known as an empire, that our independence is acknowledged."

The States, as individual States, it may be added, *never declared themselves independent*; and this second article of the Confederation, forced upon a broad-seeing Congress by State jealousy, was a political

falsehood, that has pursued the country like an avenging Nemesis from the day of its adoption to the present moment. It was a shock to the cause of freedom in this land ; for, in their short-sighted determination not to have a master, the States left themselves without a government ; and it was nothing but the individual heroism, the vigor, the patient energy of **Washington** and the *National party*, that carried us safely through the Revolutionary struggle, in spite of this disorganizing doctrine of State sovereignty, and made us a free, successful, united, and independent people.

This is the leading instance, in a word, to which I would call your devout attention, where this false theory of government nearly ruined us. Think of it, reflect upon it, fasten it for ever in your memories, that you may ever have it present with you, at what cost, over what resistance, in spite of whose opposition, we became a Nation !

2. The independence of our infant country having thus been rendered almost impossible by this State-rights fanaticism, compelling us to cry out for French aid when otherwise we would have been abundantly able to obtain it for ourselves, we are now to see the same evil influence at work in marring and well-nigh defeating our efforts in the subsequent creation of a regular constitutional government.

To realize this humiliating fact, you have only to glance at the published debates of the Constitutional Convention, which, on nearly every page, show us some example of the perpetual conflict between the national



and the provincial tempers of the two opposing parties.

The Provincialists, as we read, struggled long and violently to retain, with some amendments, the old Articles of Confederation, which embodied and embalmed the State-sovereignty doctrine, leaving all the powers of government in the hands of the thirteen separate States ; and in this contest they nearly broke up the convention, again bringing the country *to the very edge of the fearful precipice of ruin !*

As before, it was saved by the large-minded patriotism and more than generous concessions of the National party, which, at the beginning, had wished to have the members of the Senate and House, as well as the President, elected by the popular vote, as the most democratic method by which a nation could create its government. But they were compelled to bow to the belligerent attitude of the other party, which carried their cause by threats and intimidation ; and thus they consented to allow senators to be chosen by the States, as States, in this way unwillingly confessing a *quasi* independence, or separate sovereignty, to these sub-republics, when the true and complete ideal of a democratic nation, as they had properly maintained, would have required all divisions, branches, and officers of the General Government to be chosen directly by the people.

We see also the same provincial spirit at work, and gaining a triumph too, in the mode adopted for choosing the President. Instead of electing him in the dem-

ocratic way, by popular suffrage, as the Nationalists desired, the States were again brought out to perform a decisive portion of the work. "Each State," the Constitution was made to say, "shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of [Presidential] electors, equal to the whole number of senators and representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress." These electors, and not the people by their individual votes, were to make, and do make, our Presidents; and here again the National party was forced by threats of dissolution to yield its better judgment, and the more democratic principle, to save the Union, or to make a more perfect Union possible, when it was otherwise menaced by the State-rights party with annihilation.

Two of the three branches of the General Government having been thus conceded to the narrow-minded, rampant, provincial jealousy of the States, the enemies of a united country ought to have been completely satisfied. But they were not satisfied. Even when the Constitution had been thus completed,—completed by a number of such dangerous compromises,—the State-rights opposition was as fierce, as violent, as warlike, as ever. The Provincialists had not gained all they wanted. Their old cry was again shouted through the land,—the very rocks and hills had to echo it,—that the Convention and the Congress had exceeded their authority in the forming of a new government; that the Constitution had created, not an improved confederacy of States, but a "consolidated

government," since the supreme power had been taken from the States, and lodged in a body not entirely of State creation ; and they strained every nerve, as history clearly shows us, to defeat the ratification of the Constitution, thus doing their utmost again to push the country to the very brink of dissolution.

The text taken as the starting-point for all the vituperation cast upon the new Constitution was found in the frank address of the Convention, to the people of the United States, accompanying the transmission to the State assemblies of the important instrument. "In all our deliberations on this subject," said the Convention, "we have kept steadily in our view that which appeared to us the greatest interest of every true American, — the *consolidation of our Union.*"

They wished, in other words, to make a Nation ; for the above, be it remembered, are the words of the whole Convention : but the Provincialists struggled to maintain the imaginary sovereignty and supremacy of the several States ; and, when the great document came before the people for approval, they everywhere opposed it, and almost succeeded in accomplishing its defeat. "That this is a *consolidated government*," said Patrick Henry, in the ratifying convention of his native Virginia, "is demonstrably clear ; and the danger of such a government is, to my mind, very striking. I have the highest veneration for those gentlemen ; but, sir, give me leave to demand, what right had they to say, 'we the people' ? My political curiosity, exclusive of my anxious solicitude for the public wel-

fare, leads me to ask, who authorized them to speak the language of '*we the people*,' instead of '*we the States*'? States are the characteristics and the soul of a confederation. If the States be not the agents of this compact, it must be *one great consolidated government of the people of all the States.*'"

Just so, immortal orator! Would that your State-rights party had remained equally clear-sighted in their subsequent system of Constitutional interpretation! But a contemporary critic might have been curious to know what had become of the great man's broad Americanism, which, at the opening of the Revolution and in the face of danger, was ready to know nothing of his darling Virginia, and to rub out all State lines! He, however, like his illustrious follower, Thomas Jefferson, had changed his original position, and succumbed to the provincial feeling of the majority immediately surrounding him; and he was ready now to let the country tumble back again into disintegration and anarchy, rather than give up the fabled self-supremacy of his native province.

But Virginia is only one example of the doctrine preached, and the ruinous course pursued, by the same party in nearly all the States. In all of them the State-rights party did its worst and wickedest to strangle the birth of the democratic Nation. And they came within a hair's-breadth of succeeding in their felonious undertaking. Our aged citizens almost remember how it was. Their fathers, at all events, have often repeated to them, and that with patriotic

scorn, the sad story. But will the young men believe — can they comprehend — how near this State-sovereignty delusion came to a final and mad rejection of the General Government? Looking now, as we all do, to this code of fundamental law as “the mother of our peace and joy,” can the youthful voters of this generation give credence to the fact, that, against the most strenuous opposition of the Provincial party, the Union was established, and our Nation saved, by the pitiful majority of less than twenty votes !

North Carolina and Rhode Island, completely overwhelmed by State-rights jealousy, as you all know, at first flatly rejected the Constitution. Some of the other small States carried it by bare majorities, while the larger and most important of the whole number were nearly overcome by the persistent and insidious foe. The successors of that early enemy to our government do not like to be reminded of this ancestral sin. But the facts of history should be told and known. The voters now in this country have a right to know — for the future of our great Nation is now within their keeping — that even Massachusetts accepted the Constitution by a vote in her Convention of one hundred eighty-seven to one hundred and sixty-eight, — being a numerical majority of just nineteen ; while in Virginia the ballot stood eighty-eight to eighty ; and in New York, prospectively the most important of all the States, the count was thirty-one to twenty-nine, giving this powerful province to the Union by the fearful majority of *two* !

Terrible ordeal ! What a calamity to this continent, what a loss to liberty over all the world, if the State-rights opposition had at that time succeeded, — if barely fifteen of this National majority of twenty-nine had voted the other way ! It was the patriotic perseverance of these fifteen noble-minded Nationalists, the followers of **Washington**, who stood their ground against all the arguments, bribes, and threats of the State-sovereignty, Jeffersonian party, that made for you and me, fellow-citizens, the Constitution, the Union, the liberty and the country we this day enjoy ! Would that history had but preserved their names ! We would build them a monument as lofty as our mountains, as lasting as the Pyramids. But God knows them ; and long ago, if they were otherwise worthy men, as it would seem they must have been, their record has been made where it will stand for their ascending and grateful countrymen to read, and rejoice over, while the eternal ages roll ! But what contempt, what scorn, what reproaches, will serve to satisfy our indignation toward that other party, who, as the glorious sunlight of our present day was fairly dawning on them, had no eyes to see it, or through political perverseness, and a blindness still clinging to their successors, would have plunged the country and the world we live in into the chaos and darkness of the blackest of all nights ! We will follow them, however, with no curses, but leave them for ever to be dealt with by the people's patriotic and perpetual condemnation at the polls !

3. We must now proceed to a still darker page in the history of this conflict between the Provincial and National theories of government; for, the National Senate having been so provided for, under the influence of this provincial narrowness, as to represent the States *as States*, it at once became the bone of contention, the prize of battle, for the possession of which no effort was thereafter to be spared; and the South, always more provincial and narrow than the North, saw in this contest its only hope for the protection of that system of slave-labor which the civilized world was becoming every day more and more ready to condemn.

At the time, indeed, when the Constitution was ratified, seven of the thirteen States were either actually or prospectively free, leaving only six States to the slaveholding South. The North, therefore, began with the possession of the Senate,—a condition of things which the South, under fear that slavery might be at some time roughly handled, at once determined to reverse. Besides holding firmly to the provincial doctrine of State-rights, *which, in the Southern States, meant the right of holding slaves in spite of the General Government*, they resolved to gain the Senate, so as to be able at all times to block any hostile legislation in Congress, whichever section might have the Presidency and the lower House. Under all possible contingencies the State-rights Senate must be maintained as the faithful representative and safeguard of the slaveholding interest; and to secure this end, no labor,

no sacrifice, no threats, no daring measures, no expense of money or of blood, was for a moment to be considered ; for the Union itself was to be regarded as of less consequence than the preservation of a labor-system which was to maintain the Southern aristocracy in luxurious idleness, at the expense of the toil and suffering of their subject class. *Provincialism*, in a word, *was intensified into sectionalism, in the slave-holding States, from the very first.*

We have already seen, in the language of Mr. Madison, how this State-rights sentiment became so intensely geographical in the South at the very beginning of the General Government. But Madison has told us only what we hear from every other quarter. We find the same fact reported, as well as argued against, in that famous volume called "The Federalist." Chief Justice Marshall, too, in his celebrated "Life of Washington," calls attention to it. Speaking of the State-rights party during Washington's administration, he says : "The opposition, therefore, to the measures of government, seemed to be leveled at the Secretary of the Treasury, and at the NORTHERN MEMBERS by whom those measures were *generally supported*, not at the President by whom they were approved. By taking this direction, it made its way into the public mind without being encountered by that devoted affection which a great majority of the people felt for the Chief Magistrate of the Union. In the mean time the national prosperity was in a state of rapid progress, and the government was gaining, though slowly, in the public



opinion. But in several of the State assemblies, ESPECIALLY IN THE SOUTHERN DIVISION of the continent, serious evidences of *dissatisfaction* were exhibited, which demonstrated the *jealousy* with which the *local sovereignties* contemplated the powers exercised by the Federal Legislature."

The signification of all this high testimony is, that the whole South was provincial, sectional, geographical, from the very beginning of the government; and you have seen the reason for it. But of this Southern cry of opposition to the North, for sustaining Washington's theory of a great Nation, it is well known that Jefferson, though a member of the great man's political household, and acting as his confidential friend, was privately the Corypheus; and it is also to be lamented, that that entire section of our country, ever so boastful of its prowess, its frankness, and its chivalry, consented in this conduct to a similar course of double-dealing, pretending to fight Hamilton while really aiming at the President, thus giving proof of its well-earned partisan character of systematically covering a secret purpose with a thick web of professedly fair but really hidden indirections. But such has been the statesmanship of this geographical party from first to last. Its birthplace was the jealous South.

The balancing of the States, therefore, — of the slave-labor against the free-labor system, — was now seized upon as a matter of life and death to the slave-holding section; and the contest thereupon begun has since constituted the staple of our domestic history. Let us follow the battle for a moment.

On the 4th of March, 1791, before the South had time to gather up its forces, Vermont was admitted into the Union. But the South matched it as soon as possible, namely, on the 1st of June, 1792, by Virginia's cutting off Kentucky for the purpose. The original status of the Senate, however, was only now restored. So, on June 1, 1796, North Carolina gave us Tennessee, when the balance for five years contended for by the slaveholding section was gained. But the contest continued; and Ohio, received Nov. 29, 1802, restored to freedom the original majority of one State. The South was beaten and perplexed. It had no more available territory out of which then to carve new slaveholding States; and a sort of political despair settled on the Southern wing of the Jeffersonian party.

Just at this point of time, however, when the whole South was looking over the continent for more space for its darling institution, a chance was suddenly opened to it, which it as suddenly seized upon with the clutch of death. James Monroe, an intense Virginian, was sent to France by Thomas Jefferson, now President, and the head-center of the State-rights party, to purchase Florida and the Island of Orleans for slavery; and while acting in that capacity, which was confessedly an illegal one, Napoleon offered him the vast region then recently obtained from Spain, a territory lying west of the Mississippi, and larger than the whole domain then known as the United States. The price was \$15,000,000; and Monroe, without waiting for

instructions, without even notifying his government, closed the unlawful bargain. There was no law for such a purchase ; there was no provision for it in the Constitution ; he and Jefferson were also sticklers for the doctrine of strict construction. But what was law, what was the Constitution, what their own theory of interpretation, in these men's hands, when Southern institutions demanded that they should be ignored and overridden ? The purchase was made and sanctioned. This bold defiance of the people was carried out. New fields for the spread of slavery were illegally added to the Union ; and the great crime renewed the struggle of the South to get possession of the upper branch of Congress. Therefore, on the 30th of April, 1812, a corner of this new dominion was cut off, and voted in as a State, under the name of Louisiana, when the National Senate was again equally divided between the North and the South, between liberty and slavery.

Now for four years the North waited patiently for its opportunity, but committed no crime to regain its original standing. Then, on the 11th of December, 1816, Indiana knocked at the doors of the Union, and was lawfully admitted. But the South was restive ; and the next year, Dec. 10, 1817, Mississippi was pushed in to re-attain the Southern balance. The great State of Illinois, however, in one year afterwards — received Dec. 3, 1818 — walked in with the tread of a young giant to make things right again for liberty.

But the battle was not ended : it, in fact, was be-

coming more fierce than ever. Alabama was hurried up, and received Dec. 14, 1819; and then Maine —

“Bright as her skies, and as her seasons keen” —

came, clad in her furs, with her pine-branch in hand as a walking-stick, shouting “*Dirigo*” to both parties, and placing them in the positions which they had held at first.

Next arose the fearful struggle for the admission of Missouri as a match for this free-labor State. Slavery was pushing North, and the North resisted the aggression. The country was shaken to its center by the sectional, pro-slavery South. The slavery question was here, for the first time, directly thrust upon the government; and the war-note was struck so suddenly that Mr. Jefferson, who was still alive, though Monroe was President, declared to those about him, that it “startled him like a fire-bell in the night.” And well it might! The House had a majority on the side of freedom; and the State-rights Senate was divided, as at first, between the contending sections; but slavery had a Southern President, who used the entire force of his position to give the victory to the party to which he himself belonged. No man can tell, indeed, what could have been the terrible result of the angry conflict, this side of ruin, had not a few Northern senators, under the old-time and ever-returning threat of an immediate destruction of the Federal Union, weakened, and gone over to the South. So, coaxed by the compromising Clay, and moved by this fearful menace, the

North yielded. It allowed slavery to come North as far as the northern line of the new State ; and therefore on Aug. 10, 1821, Missouri entered, saving the Nation for the moment by giving to the South an equal representation in the National Senate.

But the South was still not content. Equality was no longer satisfactory to them : they wanted and demanded precedence. They aimed at absolute security for their peculiar institution ; and, to gain this point, on the 15th of June, 1836, they pushed Arkansas into the Union without the reception of any free State to match it. For more than a year the geographical party held this majority of a single State. But the North was now more than ever impatient. It was no longer easy, under the world's reproach, that more than one-half of the "free Republic," which had at its birth declared the personal "equality" of all men, was, by its weak consent, given up to human bondage ; and so, on Jan. 26, 1837, free Michigan was admitted, which restored again the lost equilibrium between the sections.

For eight years there was now a sort of treacherous calm in the Southern States. Apparently set at rest by the Missouri Compromise, which carried slavery as far north as the northern parallel of  $36^{\circ} 30'$ , they were really, though with much secrecy, diligently at work in returning themselves to power in the National Senate. They soon found their chance. Precisely as Jefferson, without law or constitution, had by the agency of his minister bought and annexed the vast region west of the Mississippi, so this Virginian disciple, James

Monroe, had purchased of Spain for five million dollars, by treaty dated Feb. 22. 1819, the territory known as the two Floridas, at the same time and in the same act "relinquishing all claim to the country lying west of the Sabine River," afterwards known as Texas. The Floridas were now, therefore, hurried up by artificial means; and March 3. 1845, they were admitted as a State under the lead of another Virginian, the treacherous John Tyler, thus securing to slavery the majority of one State over the great cause of freedom.

Flushed with victory, and possessing both the Senate and the President, the South at this time threw off her mask. During the eight years of apparent idleness, the slaveholding States, indeed, in defiance of the solemn engagement of the country to lay no claim to the trans-Sabine region, had promoted and carried on a revolution in it against the friendly and free State of Mexico. The chivalry, in vast numbers, had rushed into it with arms in their hands. They had declared it independent of Mexico, and they had maintained its independence by other acts of crime. Now, therefore, under this same John Tyler, a dominion larger than the German Empire, and richer in agricultural resources than any equal portion of the globe, was made ready for admission. While a part of Mexico it had flourished without a slave, for our sister republic had abolished the slaveholding system twenty years before: but the Southern revolutionists had restored the curse; and, last of all, they had the daring and the power, by help of their State-rights, slave-loving

provincial partisans of the North, to cover the whole land with shame by crowding, on Dec. 29, 1845, this piece of robbers' plunder into the Federal Union, thus securing to themselves the advantage of two States in the upper house of Congress.

But against the consummation of this fearful wrong the National party, then headed by Mr. Clay, had vigorously protested ; and they had warned the South that this act of annexation would of necessity bring on a war with Mexico. This, the South replied, was precisely what they wanted. A war against so insignificant a power, they said, would result in giving us a war-claim for the acquisition of still larger tracts of Southern territory ; and over this new field they could well hope to spread their slaveholding institution. So, instead of waiting for poor Mexico to declare hostilities, the insolent South, now in complete possession of the National Government, sent an army, not only into Texas, but into Mexico itself, thus adding insult to injury, and at the same time compelling Mexico to fight for her existence. The little republic of course resisted. Then the slaveholding Congress, instead of declaring war in a manly fashion, perpetrated a deliberate falsehood before the world, in its bill recognizing the state of things brought about by its own stupendous criminality. "Whereas," said the lying preamble to this bill, "*by the act of the republic of Mexico*, a state of war exists between that government and the United States." The National party denied this statement. Every intelligent citizen knew it to be false ;

and even Mr. Benton, a leading member of the slaveholding, State-rights, Provincial party, pronounced the declaration to be "a lie," though he voted for it.

The wrong was now perfected beyond recall ; but, thank God ! it proved to be a blunder.

No objection, in the mean time, could be made to the reception of Iowa, as it lay entirely above the Missouri Compromise line of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  ; and consequently, on Dec. 28, 1846, it was quietly admitted. Then, on May 29, 1848, Wisconsin as easily entered, thus restoring the geographical balance between the parties.

And now the great blunder began to show itself. To cover our expenses in the war with Mexico, made by the greed of the slaveholding interest, we had wrung from that unoffending and feeble power another vast tract of country ; and the South prepared itself to extend over it its slave-labor system, as it had already spread it over Texas. But in 1848 gold was discovered in California ; and it was soon found, that, while the poor slaves could raise rice, sugar, cotton, and even corn, with profit to the master, they could do nothing in the higher work of mining. The education, the intelligence, required for this occupation, the South had, with a blind fatality, denied to its black population ; and the lazy slaveholders, made indolent by their unnatural system, could accomplish nothing at the mines without it. The free labor of the North, on the other hand, could easily adapt itself to any thing. Our common schools, and the free course given to thought and action, had made our working-



people the most skilful, enterprising, and energetic population of the globe. No sooner, therefore, had the first note of this great discovery reached them from the Golden Gate, than they rushed to the rich gold-fields to make their fortunes. And they made them ! But they made something more and better. They made a State, — a great State, a free-labor State, — which, in less than two years from their going there, namely, on Sept. 9, 1850, they added to the cause of freedom.

The Senate now stood sixteen to fifteen, the majority of one State being in favor of the North, though the South had pushed the country into these Mexican crimes, to establish for ever its ascendancy. The great God, in other words, had, as always, proved himself to be on the side of justice !

But the South ignored Providence, defied the North, and even cursed itself for having committed such a blunder. Frenzied with rage, and mad with disappointment, it looked the world over to see what chance was left to it to strengthen its position. Webster had shown, in his memorable speech of March 7, 1850, that there was no more territory for slavery within the limits of the Union. What, then, were the Southern States to do ? To submit quietly to the inevitable, had never been their fashion ; and so, in full view of their last experiment, with a majority of States against them, they were still so blind as to undertake to draw the government into another war for acquiring territory.

Seeing no legitimate method, their former career of criminality was repeated, if not by the Southern States themselves, certainly under the instigation of their citizens, and by members of the State-rights party of the South, and for their advantage ; for it was precisely at this period that William Walker of Tennessee, the notorious filibuster, undertook to snatch Sonora for the South, from enfeebled Mexico, exactly as his predecessors had done with Texas. But he failed. Two years afterwards, in 1855, he and his band of outlaws tried the same bold experiment in Nicaragua. Here, for a time, he succeeded, overturning the lawful government, making himself president, and almost putting the state in readiness for slavery and annexation to the Federal Government. But he was subsequently resisted and overcome, when he returned home vanquished and disappointed.

After two more unsuccessful expeditions to Nicaragua, he planned his fifth and last act of piracy against Honduras. His Southern friends more than ever encouraged and assisted him ; mass-meetings of his supporters were held even in New York, and in many other Northern cities ; the State-sovereignty party everywhere characteristically applauded his efforts to revolutionize and wrong a sovereign state ; and so prominent a leader as Gen. Cass, having an eye to the Presidency, and wishing to secure to himself an undivided partisan support, declared : " I am free to confess that the heroic effort of our countrymen excites my admiration, while it engages all my solici-

tude. I am not to be deterred from the expression of these feelings by sneers, or reproaches, or hard words."

Certainly not; for, as an aspiring member of a body always ruled by the South, he was expected, if not bound, to do precisely this sort of work. Nor was his party ever known to halt at any measure promising Southern ascendancy. But, as in the Mexican affair, he and his Northern following, together with their darling section, are again routed. Walker is defeated, captured, shot. The great enterprise of bringing in Central America, to give a wider scope to slavery and the Senate to the South, fails; and there is nothing farther for it, after this series of mortal struggles, but to return to its old fight of obtaining senatorial superiority, by contending within the Union.

Sixty-nine years of our country's annals, be it remembered, had thus been given to this fearful conflict; and now, thank Heaven! the star of the slaveholding State-rights supremacy in the National Senate, in spite of all these labors, intrigues, crimes, and blunders, which had so many times threatened our existence as a Nation, waned, declined, and set, to rise no more for ever!

4. We are now to turn, fellow-citizens, in this concluding portion of our review of the past action of the State-rights, geographical, Provincial party, to a still darker and bloodier chapter.

In 1798, as has been noted, its organizer, Thomas Jefferson, had set up the doctrine that the Union had

been created by a "compact of States;" that the States, *as* States, and not the *people* of the whole country, as our fundamental law declares expressly, were the "parties" to the Constitution; that the Supreme Court was *not* the "final judge" between any one of the States and the General Government, though that instrument of the Federal Union plainly declares it to be so; that, consequently, any State at any time may pronounce itself aggrieved by any act of the General Government it may choose to consider unconstitutional and then employ any "measure of redress" it can lay its hands on, in its own defense against the Nation. Acknowledging in such case no power more sovereign than itself, it may refuse obedience to any law deemed by itself injurious, and forbid the execution of it within its territorial limits. Or, as it freely and by its own sovereign act "acceded" to the Union, it has the same sovereign right to *secede*, whenever it may regard secession to be promotive of its own highest interest. The Union, in a word, is only like one of those bastard marriages, where corrupt or timid parties agree to live together, not for life, but during their sovereign pleasure!

That, Americans, in fewest words, is the Jeffersonian, State-rights, Provincial idea of our glorious Constitution. Absurd as it is, it is no part of the purpose of this address to argue it. The argument has been already made, and made of such compact logic, by the illustrious "Defender of the Constitution," Daniel Webster, that no attempt has ever since been ventured

on to overthrow it. Let it stand in his own words for ever! But we of this day have seen more of the direful consequences of the heresy he condemned than he had. He indeed prayed God, in one of his sublimest moments, that Heaven would mercifully spare him the sight of those awful calamities which we have been compelled to witness and to suffer. The good Lord listened to his petition, and mercifully granted it. Rest his great soul in peace! We will leave him in his glory, and pass to a moment's contemplation of those terrible scenes, whose shadows were too much for his patriotic spirit.

*Firstly*, Omitting several smaller examples of the natural effect of the Jeffersonian doctrine, such as the "Whiskey Rebellion" in Pennsylvania, and "Shays' Rebellion" in Massachusetts, both of which were based on this false claim of local independence, we can not pass in silence that larger attempt to rule or ruin the Union by the South-Carolina conspirators, in 1830-1833, under the lead of John C. Calhoun, then the great apostle of the State-rights party in the Southern States.

On the thirteenth day of April, 1830, a great feast was made in the city of Washington, ostensibly to celebrate the birthday of **Thomas Jefferson**, but really to organize a Southern conspiracy against the General Government. None but State-rights politicians, of course, had the honor of being invited to it; and the first glance over the assembled magnates showed, that with the exception of **Andrew Jackson**, at that time

President of the United States, most of the dignitaries present, if not all of them, were of that class of statesmen, whether of the South or North, who had adopted **Mr. Jefferson's** radical and ruinous ideas of individual State sovereignty, which, as we have seen, asserted the right of a State to nullify acts of Congress, to secede from the Union, and to use all available means of resistance that such sovereign power might choose to employ in its own behalf against the Nation.

As a rule, such festive gatherings are apt to be somewhat merry, oftentimes hilarious. But on this occasion the eating was done in comparative silence. What conversation there was consisted of short sentences, or single words, uttered in low tones, as if the guests were thinking of something quite beyond the coming and going of the savory courses. Even the wines produced no perceptible excitement. Every man's mind seemed to be laboring with some secret burden of thought, which was either too big for utterance, or too sacred for promiscuous communication. All were really waiting for their leaders.

When the cloth was removed, and the time was fully come for a demonstration, a long list of carefully prepared sentiments was read and spoken to, all of which had been artfully drawn up so as to contain, amidst many glittering eulogiums on our republican form of government, several quiet declarations of the right of a State to self-protection, after the manner of **Mr. Jefferson's** resolutions. **Jefferson** himself was of course roundly toasted; his relations to the State-rights party

were abundantly recognized ; and then came a rousing toast, which went to the bottom of the whole business. It declared, in guarded but intelligible language, the doctrine of nullification, secession, and rebellion. It was received with a sort of hesitating, doubting, tremulous applause, while all eyes were turned inquiringly toward the burning face of the great Jackson.

The President, angry at being thus entrapped into an apparent approval of the incipient treason, at once rose to his feet. His eyes flashed fire. The conspirators, whose aim in the celebration was to gain him to their side, or to test the strength of his loyalty to Union principles, turned pale with fear. Amidst the general hush, the great man, hot with rage, uttered with a strong voice, and in his determined manner, the following *impromptu* and highly patriotic toast : "OUR FEDERAL UNION—*it must and shall be preserved!*"

Every eye fell ; for every conspirator knew what that declaration meant. Only one man present at the tables retained his self-possession. That man was John C. Calhoun. He, as the head conspirator, must now speak, or perish. So, as Catiline dared to face the great consul in the Roman Senate, this American instigator of treason, feeling himself backed by Jefferson, as he certainly was, immediately stood up, and retorted with the antagonistic sentiment : "LIBERTY, *dearer than the Union!*"

The liberty here contended for, of course, was the liberty, not of the individual citizen, but of the sove-

reign and independent State, and that to do any thing it pleased, as a sovereign and independent power, though a sworn member of the Federal Union. It was the liberty always claimed by the States South. The Southern people, following after Jefferson, had always been taught to say, as they say now, "*Our State first — the Union afterwards.*" The people of the North, walking in the footsteps of Washington, maintained and felt, as they continue to uphold, the opposite sentiment, "*The Union first — but without detriment to the local government of the constituent States.*"

At that time, as always, the Southern people were in no sense genuine Americans. They were, as they still feel themselves to be, Virginians, Carolinians, Georgians, or, at the widest generalization, Southerners. They were brought up, as they still are, to this provincial and sectional consciousness, — to a secondary regard and positive distrust of the National Union, — because possessed of an institution, which they hope in its substantial features to restore, necessarily fearful of the natural influence of a free government. Since slavery could be sustained only by State law, in opposition to the spirit of the age, the State must be made so sovereign as to be able to withstand all National interference. To make sure of this result, at the time now before us, the conspirators met to try the temper of the President. For the moment they were routed and overthrown, few men daring any longer to follow the direction of the great Southern leader, and so, for nearly two years, but little was openly undertaken.



That bold, bad man, however, never ceased his plotting ; and in 1832, such had again been the progress of his treasonable proceedings, that he deemed himself strong enough to fight his State-rights doctrine through to the bitter end, in spite of the known hostility of the mighty Jackson. The particular occasion of this second attempt to make real the wild dream of **Mr. Jefferson** is not to be forgotten.

Congress, you will remember, had enacted a tariff of a mixed character, mainly for revenue, but incidentally protecting some of the manufacturing interests of the Northern States ; and among the articles thus protected were coarse woolen goods, which were used in the South as clothing for its slaves. The price of these manufactures was thus made a trifle higher than it would have been without this protection ; and the slaveholders, always a unit for the State-rights doctrine, had to pay this higher price. The North was all the while, under the same tariff, paying an enhanced price for cotton on every yard of imported cotton cloth. But that was nothing to these conspirators. Whatever they received themselves, they would make no similar concessions to the Northern States ; and so, in a popular convention, held at Columbia, in the State of South Carolina, in the month of November, 1832, an ordinance was passed, declaring all protective tariffs of the General Government, in the language of **Mr. Jefferson**, absolutely "null and of no force," and forbidding their execution within the limits of that State.

Blind to the fact that such an ordinance would be

resisted, from stern necessity, by the constituted authorities of the United States, and particularly by the President, who had taken a solemn oath to execute the National laws, the legislature of the State, three days after the passage of this conventional decree, proceeded to carry it into immediate effect. The 1st of February, 1833, in case Congress did not repeal its protective system prior to that date, was fixed upon as the limit of the State's forbearance ; for after that day South Carolina, in the event of non-compliance of the United States with her imperial pleasure, was to consider herself, and demanded to be considered, as forming no part of the Federal Union. She did not threaten war against the government. All she wanted, she said, if her demands were refused, as she declared again in 1860, was "to be let alone," when she would proceed to govern herself, according to the Jeffersonian doctrine, as an independent sovereign. But if the United States did not accept of her proposition, or yield to her act of secession, she was prepared to defend her State-rights declaration of independence, as our fathers maintained their Declaration against the tyranny of Britain. An act was passed by her, making every white male citizen, between the ages of sixteen and sixty, a State soldier. Armies were raised, ammunition and ordnance prepared, as if for a bloody contest. The whole land was thrown into a condition of popular excitement, such as had not been witnessed since the darkest period of the Revolution. The firm earth, on which the people stood, seemed to be firm

no longer. Every Northern citizen showed signs of dread, as if shaken by an earthquake, or thrown into alarm by the agony of a world coming to the hour of its dissolution !

But the catastrophe, fellow-citizens, as we all know, passed by us, without committing us to an immediate destruction. It passed not, however, without a combined, wise, patriotic effort of the Northern people. Parties, for the time being, were totally discarded. Webster was in the Senate, General Jackson still in the Presidential chair ; and they worked together, though opposite in their partisan connections, like twin-brothers, for the salvation of their common country.

And — thanks to the great God ! — they saved it ! But let me remind you how. Webster pleaded like a **Washington**, — in the language that **Washington** might have used, — that the Constitution was not a “compact of States,” but a “Nation,” created by the whole people for their collective government and benefit. In his reply to Hayne, in his answer to Calhoun, you still read the grandest forensic defense ever given to our National idea of the General Government. But the President, though before a follower of the State-rights doctrine, now that the bitter fruit of it was given him to taste, seized the same **Washington** ideal of the Union, as the sole means of preserving it. In his celebrated proclamation to the people of South Carolina, he repeatedly declared, just as **Washington** and Webster had declared, that the United States are a Nation ;

and in this connection he directly referred the idea to Washington, calling him the "Father of his Country." Within a single paragraph, he exalts to the skies the name and work of the great author of the National party, while he crushes under foot the treasonable theory of Thomas Jefferson, which he had hitherto ostensibly but thoughtlessly supported. Finding it both false and dangerous, he hesitates not a moment to utter his last and best opinion of the nature of our government. Let us listen a moment to his vigorous sentences. They read as if written with his sword.

Speaking of the Constitution, he declares: "We have hitherto relied on it as the perpetual bond of our UNION. We have received it as the work of the assembled wisdom of the NATION. We have trusted to it as to the sheet-anchor of our safety in the stormy times of conflict with a *foreign* or *domestic* foe. We have looked to it with sacred awe as the palladium of our liberties, and with all the solemnities of religion have pledged to each other our lives and fortunes here, and our hopes of happiness hereafter, in its defense and support. Were we mistaken, my countrymen, in attaching this importance to the Constitution of our country? Was our devotion paid to the wretched, inefficient, clumsy contrivance, which this *new doctrine* would make it? Did we pledge ourselves to the support of an airy nothing, a bubble that must be blown away by the first breath of disaffection? Was this self-destroying, visionary theory the work of

the profound statesmen, the exalted patriots, to whom the task of constitutional reform was intrusted? Did the name of **Washington** sanction, did the States ratify, such an anomaly in the history of fundamental legislation? No! We were not mistaken. The *letter* of this great instrument is free from this radical fault: its *language* directly contradicts the imputation: its *spirit*, its evident *intent*, contradicts it. No, we did not err! Our Constitution does not contain the absurdity of giving power to *make* laws, and another power to *resist* them. The sages, whose memory will always be revered, have given us a practical, and, as they hoped, a permanent, constitutional compact. The FATHER OF HIS COUNTRY did not affix his revered name to so palpable an absurdity."

Thus we see, in his own words, that Andrew Jackson, till this moment a supporter and exponent of the State-rights, Jeffersonian theory of our National Government, at once abandons and condemns it in the face of danger. He condemns the very principle on which **Jefferson** had built up the party; he speaks of our country, not as a confederacy, but as a Nation; and he invokes the name, the principles, the authority, of **Washington**, which **Jefferson** had so bitterly opposed, to perpetuate the Union!

*Secondly:* Nullification, in this way defeated, shed no blood. The arguments of Webster, the energy of Jackson, and the great name of **Washington**, for this time prevented it. But we are now to witness an ex-

ample of the evil influence of the State-rights theory — and but little more can be done than to mention it — where blood was made to flow like water. Reference is made to the civil war in Kansas.

This was a war brought on by the Southern attempt, aided by partisan sympathizers at the North, to secure that State to slavery. The contest began in 1853, when the Presidency was held by Franklin Pierce of New Hampshire, and the vice-presidency by William R. King of Alabama ; their party having a majority of fourteen in the Senate, and eighty-four in the House, to stand by them. A bill of the previous Congress, to organize the territory of Nebraska, extending from the latitude of 37° to 43° north, and lying directly west of Iowa and Missouri, came up for action in the Senate. A Southern senator at once arose, and demanded that the Missouri Compromise should not be so construed as to prohibit slavery within the new territory.

No action was then taken, however, either on the bill or on this pro-slavery suggestion.

A new bill was soon brought in, known as the Kansas-Nebraska Bill, dividing this region into two Territories, with the improved idea of giving two States, instead of one, to the Southern institution ; for this second bill declared, in plain terms, that the Missouri Compromise had been swept away by the later compromise of 1850 ; and the new President had pledged himself to the South, in his letter accepting his nomination, according to the prevailing habit of his party,

to acknowledge and execute this latest bargain with slavery, in case he should be elected.

The bill was of course enacted ; and the idea now started was, that Congress had no authority to vote slavery *in*, or to vote it *out* of, either of these Territories, since it belonged of natural right to their respective populations to decide for themselves the character of their own institutions. The idea was known as that of "squatter-sovereignty ;" and it was proclaimed in order to open Kansas to an immediate slave-immigration from Missouri, while Nebraska might afterwards be captured in the same way from slaveholding Kansas.

The plot was a deep one : it originated with Stephen A. Douglas, another Northern aspirant to Southern favor ; and it laid bare the finest region of country then opened up for settlement, as a battle-ground between the slave-labor and the free-labor systems. You know the result of this bold conspiracy. As in the case of California, it was found a slow work to colonize the new territory, even from Missouri, by a permanent immigration ; for the people of that State had land enough of their own, still unoccupied, to absorb for years their surplus population ; and their only recourse, therefore, was to send their worst inhabitants across the border, not to settle, but to vote and fight for slavery.

But the people of the free States were at equal liberty to enter the new country ; and they went there in such numbers that in a few months they constituted

a decided and lawful majority of the actual settlers. The administration took alarm at the ill success of its own misbehavior. The Missourians undertook to impede the passage of Northern immigrants through their State, but the immigrants circumvented them by winding their way around through the free State of Iowa; and the government sent an army to Kansas, professedly to keep the peace, but really to see to it that slavery should be accepted and established.

These high-handed measures at the next general election changed the majority in the lower house of Congress, giving a plurality of one—117 to 116—against this forcible propagation of the Southern system. Kansas thus gained a chance of being free. But the war continued. The border ruffians, who of course were most numerous near the Missouri frontier, became more than ever violent. The first choice of a delegate to Congress took place Nov. 29, 1854. It was carried by organized bands from Missouri, who crossed the border on election-day, and returned at once after giving in their ballots. In the spring of 1855, the ruffians in this way voted to organize a Territorial legislature; and this measure was carried in the same manner. The same roughs, by the same unlawful process, met at Pawnee the next July, and adopted a State Constitution. In their haste, as well as to secure at once the establishment of slavery, they took a summary vote, adopting *en masse* the laws of slaveholding Missouri; and at the same time enacted a set of original statutes, which, to the horror of all



men, denounced the penalty of death for nearly fifty different offenses *against the institution of human bondage!* .

To defend themselves against these illegal and barbarous proceedings, the actual settlers held a Free-State convention at Topeka, Sept. 5, 1855, repudiating the work of the hired propagandists of slavery; and on Jan. 15, 1856, they elected State officers under their lawful Constitution. Nine days afterwards the State-rights President, in a message dated Jan. 24, 1856, denounced this act of the citizens as "*rebellion*;" and he sent forth a proclamation, warning them against such acts of resistance to the lawful government! What was worse, he dispatched another body of troops to enforce the constitution of the border-ruffians.

The battle raged on. In the Senate-Chamber Senator Sumner was stricken to the floor, and nearly murdered, by Brooks, a South-Carolina Congressman, in the presence of several Southern and unresisting senators, for daring to criticise these one-sided and unjust proceedings. Senators Iverson, Bright, Toombs, Pearce, looked on without remonstrance. Brooks was expelled by Northern votes, but was immediately returned by his Southern constituents. Two Free-State towns, Lawrence and Ossawatimie, were sacked. The Free-State legislature, peaceably assembled at Topeka, was dispersed by order of the President. Bloodshed, murder, robbery, devastation, spread throughout the Territory. The free legislature was the second time driven at the point of the bayonet, and scattered

in all directions, the members leaping from the nearest windows, and fleeing for their lives. Many of them were captured and imprisoned. Every Free-State citizen's dwelling had to be guarded and defended by armed force. No Free-State man could plow or plant, or gather in his crops, without fighting for his life. Hundreds of innocent men, as well as women and little children, even babes, were murdered in cold blood. Well did our own bard exclaim, —

“Where, O my country! is the spot that yields  
The freedom fought for on a hundred fields?”

But the grit of the free settlers still held out; and the slave-party, with the whole force of the State-rights administration at their back, continued to persist. Several pro-slavery governors — Shannon, Geary, Walker — were sent to represent the Southern party, and subdue the citizens to its purpose and control. A second slave constitution, made at Lecompton by the ruffians, was offered to the people in a way that amounted to a nefarious trick. Lecompton was to be voted for “with” or “without” slavery; but it was to be State-rights Lecompton at all events; and the citizens refused to vote. Lecompton, of course, was carried. The new document was sent to Washington, and accepted by the President and the State-rights party. But they failed in forcing it through the House. Another Territorial legislature was elected; and this body sent Lecompton to the polls to be voted for or against, *as a whole*, as should have been

done at the first. It was defeated by a majority of six thousand. In spite of this, however, the President, in a special message, urged on Congress the Lecompton constitution *with* slavery, declaring that the new legislature was under no obligation, and had no right, to submit it to a second vote. But he was not sustained. Then, to induce the people of Kansas to acknowledge it, large grants of land were offered them by the ruling party at Washington as a bribe. The bribe was rejected with patriotic scorn. In July, 1859, the citizens met again in convention at Wyandotte, and adopted a constitution *for ever excluding slavery*. It received a majority of four thousand at the polls.

But the fighting was not over. John Brown still held his ground. The ruffians still pursued their bloody work; and the President, with the State-rights, pro-slavery, geographical party, pushed their foul purpose to the bitter end. And why, Americans? Let me entreat you to recall the reason. It was because the State-rights party in this country, the controlling part of which has always centered in the South, had determined that Kansas should never be a State, unless it accepted slavery. But, thanks to God, by the wise foresight, the enterprise, the energy, the pluck, of the Northern people, Kansas did become a State in spite of this unequal contest of a State-rights administration and the whole South against her; and on the twenty-ninth day of January, 1861, she and her free population, with their Wyandotte constitution, marched peacefully but proudly into the nation's Capi-

tol, flaunting her blood-stained banner in the faces of her State-rights foes, at the very moment that the latter were hatching the most gigantic of all their treasons !

*Thirdly :* This one example more of the wretched work, Americans, is called for ; and yet not many words are necessary, here and now, to recall to your recollection this last assault of the Provincial party against the peace of the country and the authority of the National Constitution. The Great Rebellion can never be forgotten. It stands fresh in the memory of all our citizens to-day. By no man of you can it ever be ignored. It dwells with you wherever you may be. It goes with you wherever you can go. You see and feel it, every hour you live and breathe. The burdens of debt, of taxation, of distress, weigh you down, whatever you may do. Every morsel you eat, every thread of every garment you wear, every board and shingle and nail that go into the construction of the tenement that covers you, tell you of it, whenever a moment's cessation from increased toil gives you time to think. You behold it in the maimed men, in the weeping women, in the orphaned children, mourning their undying griefs, their eternal losses, their hopeless and cheerless destinies, all about you. The mounds and monuments on a thousand hillsides, the long, narrow streets of the dead on a thousand funereal plains, — all remind you of sorrows that no tongue can utter ; and the bones of your loved and lost, crumbling to undistinguishable dust on un-

numbered battle-fields, or dissolving in the salt waters of unknown seas, give you visions of horror and dreams of midnight agony beyond all power of human speech. "These hillocks," you say, "these rigid fields of the slain, are all that we have left of the fathers that reared, of the brothers that enjoyed, of the husbands that loved and protected us." "And yonder, in the cruel deep," I hear many a womanly voice bemoaning, "lie the limbs of my darling sons whom I once nestled in my bosom, whose infancy delighted me, whose boyhood was so full of promise, and on whose manly arms I had hoped to rely in the feebleness of my declining years. But they are gone! all gone! gone for ever! leaving me to wear out a weary life in solitude, in wretchedness, in unavailing tears!"

Such scenes, fellow-citizens, such griefs and lamentations, are beheld and heard the whole land over. And for what? Which of the two parties was it that gave existence to these sorrows? And what was the cause — the political theory — that carried the authors of these calamities to the extremes of civil war? Was the war a revolution? Was it the intolerable tyranny of the General Government that pushed the belligerent party to self-defense? For nearly three-quarters of all the time since the Government was founded, they had had possession of it. No State had ever charged a single act of unlawful interference on the part of the General Government. In the maddest moment of secession, — in the very acts declaring the separation, — no such charge was made. They went, they said,

because the Union was no longer for their interest ; and they claimed the right, *as sovereignties*, to decide the question for and by themselves. As every man knows, the cause was slavery ; and the right of secession was based on the doctrine of Mr. Jefferson, that the Constitution is a "compact of States," leaving to each member of the compact the authority to define and declare an injury, as well as "the *mode and measure* of redress."

But, fellow-citizens, I have neither time nor space, neither hand nor heart, for one moment longer to press the blood-stained argument. All I have said, in fact, was only to refresh your memories. You have seen proof enough, I think, that the State rights principle, as defined by Jefferson and practiced by the party herein called Provincial, has been evil, only evil, and that continually, from the foundation of the Government. Besides, it was in the beginning, and is now, on the other hand, a principle of no possible value to anybody, as there is no more motive for the General Government to oppress a State, than for a State to oppress the towns and counties of which it is composed. Look your national history through and through, and I challenge your best-read man to name a solitary case where the Government has ever interfered with the domestic management of any loyal State. The encroachments have ever come to us from the other side ; for, from the days of Washington, the State-rights cry waxed louder and fiercer, till it brought on the Great Rebellion : and it is the general

Government, the National Union, that requires defense, rather than the States.

At this present instant, fellow-citizens, the States South are resisting and defying the General Government, in making it impossible for one-third of their population, in any free way, to vote. An article in the *Charleston News*, so late as Feb. 4, 1880, flatly entitled, "THE NEGRO VOTE IN SOUTH CAROLINA — KILL OR CURE," proposes to disfranchise the colored people by a State law, requiring an educational test, while it saves the illiterate white vote by an ingenious provision which limits the application of the law to those who have come to the suffrage by emancipation. "Killing" the blacks by wholesale, as in the M. C. Butler and a thousand other massacres, they have found ruinous to their own industrial interests, as well as too hazardous to their political connections in the Northern States. They are now to "cure" them — that is, to reduce them politically to the condition of mere chattel-slavery again — by another process; for, as that journal openly declares: "*It is the settled purpose of South Carolina, that the intelligent and responsible citizens shall rule, whether they are the majority or not!*"

And do not their Northern allies support them in this foul work? Has one Northern newspaper, writer, orator, politician, caucus, or convention, belonging to this State-rights party, uttered the first word against it? Has not the theory of these Northern allies always been, from the very days of Jefferson, that, if the

Southern States want slavery, they shall have it? Have they not been telling us, for almost a century, that we of the North—that even the General Government—has no right to interfere with their sovereign pleasure? Did not their Presidential representative, James Buchanan, in the awful presence of secession and dissolution, proclaim the State-sovereignty doctrine, that, as he understood the case, the Constitution had given him, though the executive head of this Republic, no authority to “coerce” a sovereign State? Was not this the position of the same party at the North during all the bloody years of the terrible Rebellion? Did they not, in their National Convention, declare the war, on our part, “a failure,” and advise the Government to a partition of the country between slavery and freedom? Are they not now doing precisely as they have ever done, and exactly what they did do in 1860? South Carolina was then the leader of the Southern States. She is their leader now. Do they repent of Hamburg? Have they discarded Yazoo? Are not the ghosts of the murdered Chisolms still calling on you in every sighing breeze to mourn with them over their eternal desolations? Do not the ten thousand political murders of the Southern States, committed in support of this fearful State-sovereignty doctrine, still cry aloud for justice? Has one Northern or Southern member of this party ever called for the punishment of any one of these red-handed criminals? Do they not all live, and flourish, and hold responsible positions in the Southern States, or occupy their seats in Congress?



To this day, as South Carolina leads, the Southern people follow. All the States South are marching in the same direction; and the end aimed at is the restoration of the rebel States to the control of the country that they barely failed to ruin. Then, if they succeed, comes repudiation. Then all the results of the war are reversed. The new amendments to the Constitution will be lost; and every man voting with this party will have to bear his portion of the evil, the infamy, the curse!

The parties, in a word, with their ideas and principles, remain to-day precisely what they ever have been; and it is for the citizens who hear me to say, — for the whole North, in fact, — which of the two, in this long, sectional, oftentimes violent and bloody struggle, it is in their heart to help. Let it not be said of us, —

“ We hear this fearful tempest sing,  
Yet seek no shelter to avoid the storm;  
We see the wind sit sore upon our sails,  
And yet we strike not, but securely perish ! ”

The fundamental question of the present moment, fellow-citizens, as in all times past, indeed, is not the tariff, or the banking system, or paper money, or any similar cry of the hour, in and of themselves. These are but subsidiary matters, in regard to which partisan sides are taken, not for their own merits, but as they are supposed to affect the deeper principles herein discussed. Every act of Congress, every proposition

for debate, every party platform, is closely scanned by our thoughtful citizens, to see how far they tend toward strengthening or weakening the General Government in relation to the States. This is the key to all the proceedings now before the people. The National party, which has so many times saved the Nation from its external and internal enemies, desires to build up such institutions, enact such laws, and create such precedents, as will make it both vigorous and perpetual. Their opponent, the State-rights party, which at the first wished to have no nation, but a confederacy, a league, a compact, is striving to make the General Government weak. Every one of its measures, if you will carefully examine them, will be seen to look toward this result. A small revenue, for example, must be maintained by a State-rights tariff, so as to leave no surplus, because money is power, and power in the Union is what the States have been so blindly or treacherously taught to dread. For the same reason our army and our navy — one so feeble as to be the foot-ball, oftentimes the prey, of a few bands of naked savages; the other a laughing-stock throughout the world; and both totally inadequate to our national dignity and wants — must be reduced to the lowest points, because a strong Nation, armed properly for its defense, would be able to maintain the Union of the reluctant and jealous States. The old false fear of the Nation, which so long has troubled us, and which the anti-Republican, anti-Democratic, Greenback vagary would transform to an empire of unlimited power,

is still beheld at every step we take. It is still **Washington** or **Jefferson**; and every vote we this year cast, or shall cast for the time to come, will be only an expression of our wish to have the separate States so sovereign as to weaken the Federal Unity, or to build up a glorious but not imperial Nation, worthy of our vast possessions, our ambition, and our blood !

#### CONCLUSION.

But, fellow-citizens, I must no longer hold you. You have seen the continual damage done you, and done the country, by this narrow, absurd, un-American, Provincial doctrine. Can you tell me of one benefit that you or the Nation has received by any one's supporting it? It has made wars : did it ever save us any? It has burdened us with taxes : did it ever help us to pay a dollar of them? By establishing the Eleventh Amendment it has encouraged the Southern States to cover themselves with the shame of repudiating their honest obligations : did it ever add a feather's weight to their honorable sense of duty toward discharging them? Not one advantage can the most knowing man discover as coming to us from this "monstrous" heresy ; and it is firmly believed that our country, and first of all the Northern portion of it, will finally come to this conclusion, and act accordingly. The most careful of our countrymen have the fullest faith in the sober second thought of the reading and thinking

citizens of this now free Republic. We know the trials and triumphs of our past ; and we have therefore all the more reason, it is believed, for looking forward with confidence to our greater future. Each successive generation, educated in our schools to independent thinking, is going to see with ever-growing clearness the necessity of our being a Nation, in the place of a weak alliance between sovereign States. Jefferson will always be honored for his nobler work. But Washington will come at length to hold that unapproachable position, in the minds of the whole body of his countrymen, as our ablest soldier, our wisest statesman, as well as the world's purest man. He is already so considered by the best minds of other lands. You do not forget that when Frederick the Great, King of Prussia, sent his portrait to our hero, there was found this inscription on it : "From the *oldest* general in Europe to the *greatest* general on earth." Napoleon, on the other hand, celebrates his abilities as a *civil magistrate* in terms of equal strength : "Posterity will talk of Washington," says the imperial eulogist, "as the founder of a great empire, when my name shall be lost in the vortex of revolution." And Byron, a keener spirit than either of these great commanders, exhausts the wealth of his rich native tongue in giving our grandest American his true position on the broader platform of humanity : "Where shall the eye rest," he exclaims with poetic fervor, "weary of gazing on the great, where find a glory that is not criminal, a pomp that is not contemptible? Yes :

there is a man, the first, the last, the best of all, the Cincinnatus of the West, whom envy itself does not hate. The name of **Washington** is bequeathed to us to make humanity blush that such a man is alone in history."

But, immortal bard ! he shall not be wholly alone ; for the time is coming — it now is — when his grateful countrymen, fifty millions strong, led by their mightiest and best, shall follow in his footsteps, and rally as in the old time around him !

Whatever we do, however, or leave undone, fellow-low-citizens, the ideal Republic, as conceived by **Washington**, has now been nearly realized, perhaps virtually accomplished, by the Providence of God and the unslacking perseverance and skillful handiwork of man. In the early days, when **Jefferson's** unfortunate theory was propounded, the heavy stage-coach, lumbering along over primitive roads, carried mailbags and men across the country in about two months. We now traverse an empire nearly four times as large within a single week. Then **Jefferson's** Chinese walls between the States had some show of plausibility for their existence. Now they are obsolete, absurd, like the toys of childhood after the stripling has obtained full growth. We have not rubbed out State lines, as Patrick Henry would have done at the first, any more than we have effaced town and county lines ; but they have ceased to be barriers between the States. What care now your busy fleets of merchantmen — the white-winged birds of commerce — for these artificial

hair-strokes drawn on your paper maps between them? Can you canton off the sea? Can you make your separating edicts permanent in water, and will the winds pay obedience to your geographical metaphysics? Go parley with your rivers, — your Connecticuts, your Ohios, your Mississippis, — and see if they know any thing of these political distinctions, or halt as they come to them in their majestic sweep toward the bosom of the ocean! Go ask the locomotive, whose mechanical intelligence seems almost human, whether as he starts on his swift career, leaping the chasms, piercing the mountains, and flying before the wind in his magic journey, he stops at a State-crossing to pay homage to a provincial governor, or a local constitution! Go and talk to your telegraph, hold a consultation with electricity, make a league and covenant with the lightning, and report to us when you have bound the fiery messengers to wait for you to argue the worn-out resolutions of Mr. Jefferson! No, Americans, no! The time has gone by for these puerilities of our youth-hood. We are now quite on the verge of our maturity. We are a great country. We are a mighty people. We are *one* people. Since the removal of human bondage we have no separate interests. We are at last a Nation such as Washington conceived and fought for, — such as the bard-prophet predicted for us in undying verse : —

“Distinct as the billows, and one as the sea.”

Yes, fellow-countrymen, it is our happy privilege

to say, that we have now only to preserve and strengthen what divine Providence has given us. What our fathers established, we are only called on to keep. And will you suffer me to ask, in what way, with the facts of our national history thus brought to your remembrance, you imagine you can best serve this patriotic purpose? Will you do it, can it be done, by supporting a party that contended, at the very first, to retain the old Articles of Confederation, which, by acknowledging the sovereignty of the States, came so near defeating the cause of National independence? Can you do it by adhering to a political organization that resisted and almost rejected the glorious Constitution, under whose benign influence we were made a Nation, now so wealthy and so great? Can you do it in connection with those partisans, who, narrow, sectional, geographical, selfish, have more than once done their worst to overthrow the government? Do you think of Kansas as an encouraging instance of their policy and temper? Will you not consider, that, if they had had their way, we never should have been a country; that the Union would have been rejected; and that even after the legal acceptance of the Constitution, by a pitiful majority, they would a dozen times have broken up the General Government? Can you trust the patriotism of such a party? Do you believe in the doctrine that authorizes a State, at its own option, in its own way and manner, by its mere sovereign will, at any moment, to nullify the laws, and dissolve the Union? Do you justify — do you wish

to indorse — the late terrible Rebellion ; and are you safe in putting the government into the power of those who so recently did their utmost to ruin it? Have those people, just now in arms against you, who staked their lives and fortunes in an attempt to divide and destroy the country, so suddenly become to you such loving friends, that you can trust them with greater confidence than you can your Northern fellow-citizens who saved it? Will the party that loaded you so heavily with debt, that murdered so many of your neighbors, relatives, families, sympathize the most sincerely with you in your misfortunes, or do the most to help you in carrying the burdens of taxation thus heaped upon you? Does the political leopard so easily change his spots, that, after tearing your flocks to pieces, he can be received into your households with a commission to take good care of your wives and children in your absence? Do you deem it wise to aid in putting your affairs into the possession of those, who, whether of the South or North, have been so hostile to your interests, or so regardless of your defense, as to make or encourage a perpetual war upon them both? And are you, the many and majority of us all, who live by the free labor of your hands, so anxious to continue your competition with the ill-paid labor of the South, which, by upholding the slave-labor system, has so long held down *your* wages and the legitimate returns for *your* toil to the lowest living point, as to help perpetuate a policy, a party, that has so mercilessly worked against you in



all the past? Will the success of the old slave-labor party, now that you have freed the slave, so hasten and conspire to elevate the colored working-people of the South, as to result in the raising of their daily pay, *and thereby your own*, to a more generous standard? Can you, can the country, gain any thing, in any way whatever, by their success?

If so, fellow-citizens,—if you can answer affirmatively these heartfelt and home-sent interrogations,—then you will vote with the State-rights, South-begotten, Provincial organization, still wedded to the false, worn-out, suicidal theory of government maintained by the followers of **Mr. Jefferson**. Otherwise—and I cannot help but think it will be otherwise—you will go with that other party, cradled and nurtured in your own North, which in the beginning *made*, and many times since has *saved*, the freedom, greatness, and glory of our Nation. You will stand, in a word, on the side of **Washington**. You will rally round the starry flag,—the flag of your Revolutionary sires; the flag that has ever scorned the heresies of State-sovereignty, nullification, and rebellion; the emblem of unity, prosperity, power, and progress; the glorious ensign of peace at home, and of honor and influence in all other countries; the mighty banner of a free empire, feared alike by domestic traitors and by foreign tyrants; the token of a world's redemption from political and mental thralldom, to liberty, equality, and genuine fraternity, among God's earthly children of all climes, conditions, colors, races; a sign

more wonderful than the labarum of the Roman legions, more to be prized than the gonfalon of Milton's angelic hosts, as menacing no hostilities to the weakest of mankind, but offering the succor of hope to those of every name, who lie crushed before the altar of human freedom — for it is the flag, not of any single province, but of the *one great AMERICAN REPUBLIC* !

In a word, you will see to it, fellow-citizens, that this country becomes in every way a NATION — that it remains a NATION — which, while composed of several parts, shall be as obedient to order as the solar system ; for as each separate globe is a minor system of itself, with its times and tides, its woods and winds and waters, and a motion of its own about its axis, thus constituting within itself a perfect world, as if alone in space, yet revolving in a grander orbit in subjection to a mightier power, ordained to give law and direction to all the movements of a whole sisterhood of similar planets ; and as this splendid harmony is never to be disturbed by the weak or rude ambition of any one of these subordinate bodies, to play the role, usurp the authority, or scorn the majesty of the central, all-controlling, life-giving sun, but go on for ever sweetly chanting its according note in its destined career of joy, and love, and peace ; in the same way our composite NATION — our ONE REPUBLIC out of *many States* — is to show to coming ages, to the wide universe, with what divine impetus, with what lofty inspiration, the illustrious creators of our civil government aspired to imitate the sublimest work of God !



